Generations of sacrifice will not be forgotten

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From the Admiral / Message de l'amiral

Remember their courage and sacrifice

Every year on November 11th, Canadians pause to remember our fallen, our veterans and our ill and injured.

It is an act we should all undertake with a great deal of respect and reflection as we honour those who stood bravely on guard in defence of our country and its people.

Just as it was their duty to serve their nation, it is our duty to honour and remember their sacrifice.

Every year there are fewer Veteran's with us, which makes it even more important to take the time to reflect on their sacrifices and pay our respects to them.

I ask that you also take time to remember the military families who are so greatly impacted by the absence of their loved ones in times past and in our current times. They are truly the true strength behind the uniform.

Since our nation's early beginnings, our military members have been making enormous sacrifices to protect the sovereignty of Canada and maintain peace throughout the world.

In the battles of Neuve Chapele, The Somme and Vimy Ridge and in the harsh waters of the North Atlantic Ocean and in combat engagements as part of the Pacific Campaign, the sacrifices made by our sailors, soldiers, air men and air women helped forever redefine our nation's character.

From two World Wars, the Korean War and various peacekeeping missions, to our more recent engagements in the Middle East, Southwest Asia and Eastern Europe, Canadians from across the nation, including First Nations, Inuit and Metis, have served and defended Canada with honour and distinction.

Your Canadian Armed Forces remains committed to maintaining peace and freedom through various missions both here at home and abroad.

This Remembrance Day, I ask you to join with our veterans and with Canadians everywhere to remember all those who have served, and all those who continue to serve our nation.

As we remember, please include the crew of *HMCS Winnipeg* in your hearts, as they are currently deployed in efforts to help stabilize the situation in Ukraine.

May we all remember the courage and sacrifice of the thousands of Canadians who gave their lives to uphold peace and freedom during times of conflict, and who helped build this great country.

Let us never forget the cost of our freedom.

Yours Aye,
Rear-Admiral Gilles Couturier, Commander, Maritime Forces Pacific/ Joint Task Force Pacific

Rear Admiral Gilles Couturier

Chaque année le 11 novembre, les Canadiens marquent un temps d'arrêt pour honorer nos anciens combattants ainsi que ceux qui ont péri ou qui ont été blessés en service. Nous devrions tous nous engager à rendre hommage avec tous les égards à ceux qui ont vaillamment par le passé veillé à défendre notre pays et à nous protéger. Comme il était de leur devoir de servir notre patrie, il est du nôtre de nous souvenir et d'honorer leur sacrifice. Chaque année, de moins en moins d'anciens combattants se joignent à nous pour l'événement, ce qui accentue l'importance de leur rendre hommage pour les sacrifices qu'ils ont consentis et de leur témoigner de notre plus grande reconnaissance.

Il nous incombe aussi de rendre hommage aux familles militaires qui sont toujours grandement touchées par l'absence de leurs proches, tant par le passé qu'encore aujourd'hui. Souvenons-nous que nos familles sont la force conjointe.

Depuis la fondation de notre pays, nos militaires ont fait d'énormes sacrifices pour protéger notre souveraineté et maintenir la paix dans le monde. Dans les batailles de Neuve-Chapelle, de la Somme et de la crête de Vimy de même que dans les eaux houleuses de l'Atlantique Nord et les combats de la campagne du Pacifique, les sacrifices de nos marins, soldats, aviateurs et aviatrices ont contribué à définir le caractère distinctif de notre nation.

Des Canadiens de partout au pays, dont des autochtones, ont servi et défendu le Canada avec honneur et distinction durant les deux guerres mondiales, la guerre de Corée, au sein de diverses missions de maintien de la paix et plus récemment dans le cadre de nos interventions au Moyen-Orient, en Asie du Sud-Est et en Europe de l'Est.

Vos Forces armées canadiennes demeurent résolues à préserver la paix et la liberté par différentes missions autant au pays qu'à l'étranger.

En ce jour du Souvenir, je vous demande de vous joindre à nos anciens combattants et aux Canadiens afin de rendre hommage à ceux qui ont servi ou qui servent actuellement notre pays. Gardons dans nos pensées l'équipage du NCSM Winnipeg qui se trouve présentement en déploiement et travaille à la stabilisation de la situation en Ukraine. Souvenons-nous toujours du courage et des sacrifices de milliers de Canadiens qui ont donné leur vie pour conserver la paix et la liberté en temps de conflits et qui ont aidé à la construction de ce beau pays.

N'oublions jamais le coût de notre liberté.

Mes salutations cordiales,
Le commandant des Forces maritimes du Pacifique et de la Force opérationnelle interarmées (Pacifique)
Contre-amiral Gilles Couturier

Remembrance Day ceremonies on South Vancouver Island

Personnel from Maritime Forces Pacific/Joint Task Force Pacific will be participating in several ceremonies in the region. Those laying wreaths on behalf of the Canadian Armed Forces are:

9:45 a.m.

VETERANS' CEMETERY
1190 Colville Road
• Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Peckham, Commanding Officer, Canadian Forces Health Services Centre Pacific

10 a.m.

COBBLE HILL
Cobble Hill Community Hall, 3550 Watson Avenue, followed by ceremony behind the community hall at the Liberation Park cenotaph.
• Captain Gordon Hodson, Officer Commanding, 39 Signal Regiment Detachment Victoria

10:50 a.m.

NANAIMO
Cenotaph, 85 Front Street
• Commander Darren Rich, Commanding Officer, Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges

10:55 a.m.

OAK BAY
War Memorial, Beach Drive, Uplands Park
• Major Phil Redgrave, Senior Staff Officer Operations, 1 Canadian Air Division Headquarters Detachment Esquimalt

VICTORIA - CITY OF VICTORIA CENOTAPH
(Legislature Building), 501 Belleville Street
• Rear-Admiral Gilles Couturier, Commander Maritime Forces Pacific/ Joint Task Force Pacific

ROSS BAY CEMETERY
1495 Fairfield Rd
• Commander Ed Hooper, Commandant, Canadian Forces Fleet School Esquimalt

ESQUIMALT - MEMORIAL PARK CENOTAPH
1229 Esquimalt Road
• Captain(N) Steve Waddell, Base Commander, Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt

WEST SHORE COMMUNITIES
Veterans Memorial Park located at the intersection of Goldstream Avenue and Veterans Memorial Parkway (Millstream)
• Commodore Jeff Zwick, Commander, Canadian Fleet Pacific

SIDNEY - TOWN HALL
2440 Sidney Avenue
• Lieutenant-Colonel Shawn Williamson, Commanding Officer, 443 Maritime Helicopter Squadron

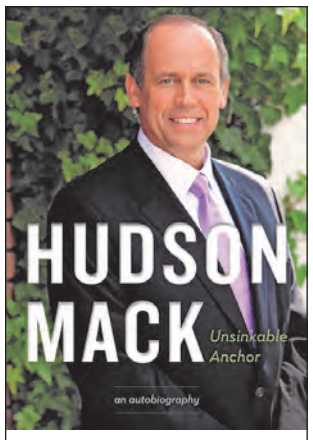
SAANICH - MUNICIPAL HALL
770 Vernon Avenue
• Lieutenant-Colonel Heather McClelland, Commanding Officer, 11 Field Ambulance (Victoria)

SOOKE - SOOKE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
6726 Eustace Road
• Captain(N) Christopher Earl, Commanding Officer, Fleet Maintenance Facility Cape Breton

DUNCAN - CHARLES HOEY PARK
Canada Avenue
• Captain(N) James Clarke, Commanding Officer, Canadian Submarine Force

LANTZVILLE - LANTZVILLE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION,
7225 Lantzville Road
• Commander Brigitte Boutin, Base Administration Officer, Canadian Forces Base Esquimalt

PARKSVILLE – MOUNT ARROWSMITH LEGION
146 Hirst Avenue
• Lieutenant-Commander Trent Nichols; Operations Officer, Canadian Forces Maritime Experimental and Test Ranges



matters of OPINION

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People Talk

Lookout asked those attending the Poppy Campaign launch at the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 172, Esquimalt:

Whom and what will you think about on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month?

I think of my husband Merv (Sneddon) who is here with me today, and that he made it back after being in Korea for 14 months, and my dad who served for England in World War One, and later came to Canada as a Sergeant Major in the army.

Evelyn Sneddon

I've lived my whole life in Esquimalt, so I automatically think of all the men and women who have served in the navy. I also think of my first husband who was in both wars, Korea and the Second World War.

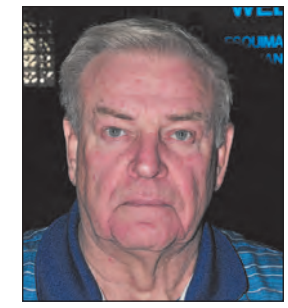
Shirley Nasheim

I think of images like flag-draped coffins, the sacrifices they made storming Juno Beach, getting ready to paratroop into Normandy, and then all of the cemeteries where you see rows and rows of crosses.

MS Brandon Ensom

I'm with the Raven Brownies, so I look at it through their eyes and how they see our veterans from the perspective as both children and young Aboriginal people.

LS Nadine Beckett



I think of all those who have passed in the terrible wars, but also my son who I lost three years ago to ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). This is my 20th year as Master of Ceremonies for the Esquimalt Cenotaph and I'll never forget the moment some years back when my grandson broke the silence by exclaiming "hi grandpa."

Douglas J. Grant

Historica Dominon Institute, The Memory Project

Keith "Duke" Sherritt remembers the Korean War

Editor's note: This oral transcript has been edited for readability.

What I liked most about joining the army was they made a man out of me.

And all the discipline, which I didn't like at first, all the discipline paid off, especially when I went to Shilo [Manitoba] for training. I did my jump course there, and then we finished the training, and then there was the accident at Canoe River in British Columbia. A lot of the guys were hurt and some died.

(On Nov. 21, 1950, near Valemount, British Columbia, a westbound troop train travelling from Camp Shilo, Manitoba, to Fort Lewis, Washington, and the eastbound Canadian National Railway Continental Limited collided head-on. The collision killed 21 soldiers from 2 Field Regiment Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.)

I was a radio operator and we brought a train into Shilo and we went straight down from there to Seattle and boarded the boat. It took us about 16 days from Seattle, Washington, to Yokahama, Japan, and then we left there and went to Korea. I think it was Inchon [Korea], but anyway, we had to go in by landing barges.

When we got there, we lined up and the people we were relieving didn't have any clothes to go back to Canada in. This guy was about my size and I gave him my grey coat and so he'd something warm to wear.

Then I got a parka and everything else and we moved out to the front, or close to it. I was scared, to tell you the truth.

We moved into our position and I was sent to Hill 355 because that's where they needed a radio operator at the observation post. That's where your officer calls down to fire and I radioed back to the guns. Like he's spotted something and I'm on the radio and he says, "Battery target, battery target, battery target." I get on the mike on the radio and I say back to the guns, "Battery target, battery target, battery target," and they all run to the guns. And then he makes corrections and everything else.

(Hill 355, Oct. 23 to 24, 1952: After intense enemy bombardment, Chinese soldiers launched an assault on B Company, 1 Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment's position on the hill. The advance was halted due to counter-attack from D Company, Royal Canadian Regiment, and heavy artillery fire from 1 Battalion, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.)

I was there a long time. It wasn't bad until they mortared us pretty badly, and then at the bottom of the hill they called a spur [to Kip'un'gol], and to get there, you've got to drive; they called it the bowling alley or the "mad mile" because you're under enemy observation for a whole mile on the big hill across from us. They can lay down mortar fire and try to knock you out.

I moved into the bunker there and the night we got surrounded, they hit the RCRs on the spur, the little hill down below us, and they killed a bunch, captured a bunch and they broke through. And one artillery officer, not mine, called down, fire on our own position because we were surrounded, and they pounded fire in there, right on our own position and then the Princess Patricia's [1 Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry] counter-attacked and drove the Chinese into the wall of fire and cut them to ribbons. That's how we got relieved. I was 19 and very scared, but I didn't run and neither did anybody else and that made me feel proud.

When we came back, there was no parades, no flag waving. They put us on a train and sent us home for a couple of days and they forgot about us. And that's why they called it Canada's forgotten war.

The Memory Project invites veterans and Canadian Armed Forces members to share their military experience with fellow Canadians, young and old. Through an online archive and speakers bureau, more than 1.5 million Canadians have heard their stories. www.thememoryproject.com

The poppy:
an enduring symbol of remembrance

The poppy, in the language of flowers, stands for consolation, while red is symbolic of passion and love. This is the story of how these common field flowers grew to be an international symbol of remembrance.

Remembrance Day marks the anniversary of the official end of the First World War hostilities at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of November 1918.

The poppy is the international symbol of remembrance—and is traditionally worn on the left lapel, or as close to the heart as possible—from the last Friday in October to the end of the day on Nov. 11. Canadians wear poppies to honour and remember the ultimate sacrifice paid by more than 117,000 Canadians to date. Nineteen million

Canadian-made poppies and about 70,000 wreaths, crosses, and other items were distributed across Canada and overseas this year.

Millions of dollars in donations made to the Poppy Campaign are held in trust and used to help veterans and their families who are in financial distress, as well as to help fund medical appliances and research, home services, care facilities and numerous other officially-sanctioned purposes.

During the Napoleonic wars of 1799-1815, the poppy appeared almost mysteriously in battlefields and graveyards in spring and summer, and was one of the few plants able to thrive in the torn-up soil, and seemed to spread a consoling red blanket over the buried soldiers.

During the First World War, poppies began to grow spontaneously again during springtime in battlefields and among the graves of soldiers in Flanders, which is an ancient region in what is now parts of Belgium and France.

Airborne poppy seeds floated over the ravaged landscape and settled into the disturbed ground of the battlefields and graveyards. The flowers flourished in the soil which was enriched by lime from the rubble and bomb debris.

Following the death of one of his fellow soldiers, Canadian doctor, soldier and poet Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae (1872 - 1918) noticed this phenomenon and wrote about it in his legendary poem *In Flanders Fields*.

First published in England's Punch magazine in December 1915, the poem came to represent the sacrifices of all who fought in the First World War. Just two days before the Armistice in November 1918, the poem inspired an American woman, Moina Michael from Athens, Georgia, to wear a poppy year-round in memory of the war dead.

The idea of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance continued to grow.

In 1920, Anna E. Guérin of France visited the U.S. and met Miss Michael. Madame Guérin then resolved to sell poppies handmade by widows around Armistice Day to raise money for poor children in the war-torn areas of France. During 1920 and 1921, she convinced veterans' associations in the U.S., Britain, Canada and New Zealand to adopt the poppy as a symbol of remembrance.

Photo by Cpl Heather Tiffney

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is blanketed with poppies, wreaths, flags and images at the National War Memorial following the Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa, Ontario.

At first, disabled veterans made the poppies by hand but as time went on and the required volume increased, factories took over. Britain's poppy factory, established in 1922, makes about 36 million poppies annually.

Today, Canadian poppies have four petals but no stem or leaves and are made from flocked plastic, whereas in Britain, the poppies are made from paper, have two petals, a leaf and a stem. In Scotland, they are also made of paper but have four petals and no leaf or stem. All poppies today have a black centre for botanical accuracy.

In 2000, when The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier became part of the National War Memorial in Ottawa, a new tradition spontaneously arose when those in attendance began placing their poppies on the tomb at the end of the ceremonies.

Legion announces Silver Cross Mother

Royal Canadian Legion

Tom Eagles, Dominion President of The Royal Canadian Legion, has announced that Sheila Anderson will be this year's National Memorial (Silver) Cross Mother.

Mrs. Anderson lost her eldest son, Corporal Jordan Anderson, when a roadside bomb killed six Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, as well as an Afghan interpreter, in the Panjwaii district southwest of Kandahar City on July 4, 2007.

Mrs. Anderson lives in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. She is the first National Memorial (Silver) Cross Mother from the Northwest Territories since the Legion began this tradition more than 60 years ago.

As the National Memorial (Silver) Cross Mother, Mrs. Anderson will lay a wreath at the National War Memorial on Nov. 11 on behalf of all Canadian mothers who have lost a son or a daughter in the military, either in action or in the course of his or her normal duty.

Throughout the year she will also be called upon to perform other duties honouring the fallen from all conflicts.

The Memorial (Silver) Cross was instituted on Dec. 1, 1919, and was issued as a memento of personal loss and sacrifices on behalf of all widows and mothers who lost a child while on active duty in the service of their nation, or whose death was consequently attributed to such duty.

Every year, Legion provincial commands and individuals forward nominations for the selection of a National Memorial (Silver) Cross Mother. These nominations are reviewed by a selection committee at Dominion Command and one mother is chosen for the year.

Corporal Jordan James Anderson

Cpl Jordan Anderson and five other Canadian soldiers and an Afghan interpreter were killed when their armoured vehicle struck an explosive device while returning from a patrol just south of Nakhonay in Panjwaii district, approximately 20 kilometres southwest of Kandahar City July 4, 2007 – some two weeks before his 26th birthday and only a few weeks from the end of his second six-month tour.

He was a member of the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, based out of Edmonton, Alberta.

Born in 1981, in Iqaluit, Nunavut, he joined the Canadian Armed Forces in 2000 in Regina, Saskatchewan.

His widow, Amanda, who had married Jordan on July 21, 2005, accepted a posthumous degree in Bachelor of Arts on his behalf from the University of Manitoba. He'd been studying online while serving overseas. It was the first time since the Korean War that a degree was given out posthumously.

Cpl Anderson served two tours in Afghanistan. He first served in 2002, receiving the South-West Asia Service Medal – Afghanistan Bar (SWASM).

In 2005, Cpl Anderson's parachute training almost ended his career when a jump went wrong and he crushed two vertebrae. The doctors reportedly gave him a two per cent chance of ever jumping again and only a 10 per cent chance of being able to stay in the infantry. But he refused to give up and eventually returned to active military service.

Cpl Anderson arrived in Kandahar for his second tour of duty in 2007. He was 25 years old and the 66th fallen soldier from Canada's mission in Afghanistan.

He was given a military funeral and is buried in the National Military Cemetery at Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa.

Sheila Anderson

Corporal Jordan James Anderson

Young Canadian carries torch of Remembrance

Isabelle Ava-Pointon
Vimy Prize Winner

November 11th is coming. Once again we feel mildly uncomfortable at the thought of having to stand in silence and think of unpleasant things.

We are in the midst of the centenary of the First World War, and there are no living veterans of that conflict.

Now, more than ever, it is our duty to keep the flame of remembrance burning.

That word, remembrance, is often heard this time of year. But why commemorate events that happened a century ago? Why must we honour lives that were cut short 100 years past?

Some answers are easily apparent. Remembering the horrors of war will ensure that we do everything in our power to avoid armed conflict. Yet some reasons are not so evident, and thus for young people like myself, it can be hard to understand the importance of this day.

Before I participated in the Beaverbrook Vimy Prize, I knew it was important to remember the World Wars, but I was not entirely sure why. A fortnight in Europe changed all that.

There is another reason for remembrance equally as important as ensuring future peace, but much harder to grasp: it is our duty to remember and honour the lives of the tens of thousands who gave their all for their country. The suffering that these men and women had to endure is beyond the scope of most of our imaginations.

This summer I walked across the battlefields of Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele. I ran across No Man's Land on the Somme. I waded in the sea and marched through the sands of Juno beach. I crawled through muddy trenches and descended into souterrains. I studied military strategy and battle tactics. Still, I will never understand what the soldiers of the Great War went through.

But there is one thing I now understand. It began with a visit to Essex Farm Cemetery, Belgium, located right beside the field dressing station where John McCrae wrote *In Flanders Fields*. It was a beautiful, peaceful plot of land, surrounded by farmers' fields. There were trees, shrubs, flowers, and 1,200 white headstones. We walked among them, reading names, ages, regiments, dates of death and epitaphs. It was silent, apart from the quiet murmurings of my friends as they addressed the dead.

From that moment on I understood. A number in a book is one thing, we can read there were 66,000 Canadian fatalities in the First World War, and not be able to truly comprehend. But it is much easier to imagine 66,000 men when standing in Tyne Cot Cemetery, looking over 12,000 graves. Each gleaming stone was once a man with a mother, a father, brothers, sisters, a sweetheart, and comrades. All the love of a family, of friends and neighbours was poured into this man, and one bullet or shell in France ended it all.

These soldiers fought for the peace we now enjoy, for the freedom of peoples across the globe. They fought for friends and for family and for home. And some never returned home.

We owe them this much at least: to remember them. In songs, in poems, in paintings and monuments. In tears at a graveside, in silence on this day. Remember their names and their deeds and their love.

As is written on countless of those white stones in France: "Greater love hath no man than he lay down his life for his friends".

Isabelle Ava-Pointon, 2015 Beaverbrook Vimy prize winner, scans the names of 580,000 men who died in northern France during the First Word war. The alphabetically engraved names reside on the Ring of Remembrance - Notre Dame de Lorette.

Isabelle Ava-Pointon travelled to Europe in August 2015 as a winner of the Vimy Foundation's Beaverbrook Vimy Prize. This scholarship program gives youth the opportunity to study the interwoven history of Canada, France, and Great Britain during the First and Second World War.

The Vimy Foundation is a Canadian charity that works to preserve and promote Canada's First World War legacy as symbolized with the victory at Vimy Ridge in April 1917, a milestone where Canada came of age and was then recognized on the world stage.

10 Quick Facts on World War One

Veterans Affairs Canada

1. The First World War began on Aug. 4, 1914, with the Triple Entente (United Kingdom, France and Russia) and other nations (such as Canada and Australia) against the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy). However, Italy refused to join in the war effort and instead, in May 1915, it aligned with Britain and France and declared war against Germany and Austria-Hungary.

2. Canadians saw their first major action at Ypres on April 22, 1915. Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae was inspired to write *In Flanders Fields* to honour a friend who died during this battle.

3. The Battle of the Somme began early on the morning of July 1, 1916. The 1st Newfoundland Regiment suffered especially heavy losses on that day. Of the approximately 800 Newfoundlanders who went into battle, only 68 were at roll call the following morning.

4. The Battle of Vimy Ridge began on the morning of April 9, 1917, and ended four days later. It was the first time all four divisions of the Canadian Corps fought together as one formation. The Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge is considered to be a key point in shaping Canada as a nation.

5. Canadians took part in the Battle of Passchendaele from October to November 1917. In a muddy corner of Belgium, Canadians overcame almost unimaginable hardships to capture this strategic village.

6. More than 2,800 Canadian Nursing Sisters served with the Canadian Army Medical Corps.

7. Approximately 4,000 Aboriginal Canadians enlisted during the war. This represented nearly one-third of all Aboriginal-Canadian men eligible to serve.

8. Approximately 70 Canadians were awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery in the presence of the enemy" during the First World War.

9. More than 650,000 men and women from Canada and Newfoundland served during the First World War. More than 66,000 gave their lives and over 172,000 were wounded.

10. The fighting ended on Nov. 11, 1918, with the signing of the Armistice. The war officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.

A DIARY OF DISCOVERIES...

Rachel Lallouz
Staff Writer

Sylvia Thistle-Miller pulls on a pair of tight white gloves, before carefully picking up a palm-sized journal of red, worn leather.

"I was raised with the stories of my past told to me as I sat on my grandmother's lap," she says, while turning the yellowed pages. "But with many people who fought in the wars, they don't share everything. There was a lot of quiet."

Three years ago, Thistle-Miller was cleaning out her mother's house when she came across a box of tiny, pocket-sized diaries. As a child, she was given several of them by her grandmother, and upon rediscovering them she set about throwing them out.

"But I noticed that one of them was so much more worn than the rest," she says. "I don't usually check these things, but I ended up opening it."

Written in barely legible cursive were the carefully pencilled notes of her grandfather's experience fighting in France and Belgium during the First World War. Thistle-Miller was shocked to find detailed day-to-day accounts of his time spent in the trenches at Ypres, where he wrote of being gassed in what is known as the world's first chemical warfare attack on April 22, 1915.

Thistle-Miller was three-years-old when her grandfather died, and says the only knowledge she has of him lies in black-and-white photographs, stories passed down from family members, and the journal.

Her grandfather, Ralph Thistle, was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 1889, to a family of ship builders and printers who had called the province home since the 1500s.

"Prior to World War One breaking out, my grandfather had been a member of the 48th regiment of the Newfoundland Highlanders for seven years," says Thistle-Miller. "He already knew how to shoot, and perform autopsies, and he had medical and survival experience."

When the First World War was declared in September 1914, Thistle's involvement with the local militia proved valuable. He volunteered in early September, when he was 25 years old. Given his military background, Thistle was sent to England just 12 days later to begin formal training as a Private.

The first of his several entries, starting on Dec. 17, 1914, detail Thistle's account of preparing for battle:

January 2nd, 1915:… Breakfast at 7:00. It is a fine day but a little cold.

Though simple, Thistle-Miller says readers must keep in mind what the soldiers would have been doing. Barely a moment would have been afforded to write in a journal during training.

As the entrues progress into February, a young Thistle begins to write about travelling with his regiment to France, with the goal of reaching the battleground outside of Ypres. The journey was cold, long, and never ending.

February 16th, 1915: …Still in cars no room to sleep, he writes, referring to the exhausting journey to the Western Front.

February 19th, 1915: …Can hear guns from the front….writes Thistle of the German shelling and enemy fire far in the distance.

"Entries through February and March 1915 are him talking about lying in fields of mud and sleeping in barns," says Thistle-Miller.

It is at this point in the journal that a tone of frustration is palpable in his journal entries, as Canadian soldiers were given little guidance to their final location.

"You can tell he's upset because he isn't sure where he and the men are being led," she says.

Nearing Ypres, the soldiers rode about 24 km on motor vehicles, and walked the remaining 11 km, where they arrived to be billeted in the town.

Went through town…by cathedral…the city is in a mess…, he writes. *Very sore.*

Though difficult to make out, it is estimated that Thistle reached the trenches of the Western Front by the end of February 1915.

Raining a little…no shelter... trenches.. hints at the start of Thistle's days spent crawling in the freezing mud of Ypres.

He writes of men around him wounded by enemy fire, of the bombing of the town of Ypres, and the death toll of civilians. Numerous entries reveal that his feet were troubling him in the long hours spent ankle or knee deep in the mud – what we now understand to be "trench foot," the literal rotting away of flesh immersed in water for long periods of time.

"I don't think you could ever truly imagine the carnage and how they were living," says Thistle-Miller.

Late February 1915: Bullet struck me in the head, writes Thistle. *But not bad. I have it for a souvenir. I was the first of the 48 Highlanders to get struck by a German bullet.*

In-between sleeping in dugouts, Thistle and his regiment found lodging in barns, convents, and chapels outside of the battleground.

March 6th, 1915: …slept on stable floor made of bricks very hard but welcome, writes the fatigued soldier.

By the first week of April, Canadian troops were moved from what was termed more of a "quiet" sector on the front lines to a bulge in the Allied line directly in front of the city of Ypres. Thistle and his men fought alongside French and British troops in an attempt to gain control of the city and push the German troops back.

But on April 22, the Germans introduced a new weapon to the battle: poisonous chlorine gas. Following an intense artillery bombardment, 160 tons of gas was released into the air. The soft northeasterly breeze blew thick clouds of yellow-green chlorine into the Allied trenches.

It is estimated that numerous allied soldiers died within 10 minutes of inhaling the gas, from asphyxia and tissue damage to the lungs. Many others were blinded. When combined with water, the chlorine gas formed hypochlorous acid that destroyed the moist tissues in their bodies.

In Thistle's journal, his writing two days later is barely legible, except for:

April 24: …trenches with gas. Hard to breathe…

His final note on this day scrawls lightly off the page. Three days in the journal after remain blank.

"They were left in the trenches for dead," says Thistle-Miller.

On April 27, Thistle awoke on a stretcher, to find himself en route to a hospital in Versailles, France. Entries after this date were heartbreaking for Thistle-Miller to read, as they detail her grandfather's struggle to regain his health after the gassing.

May 7:…am feeling very sick…

Later on throughout the month: *…can hardly walk… pains across my chest…same today…not as well…*

Two months after the gassing, Thistle's health was still suffering. His doctors marked him "unfit for service" and he was assigned to clerical-type work for the Allied forces in France. The last entry in his diary is marked on Dec. 4, 1915, when he visits the Cathedral of Notre Dame for the first time.

"He just drops off writing after that," says Thistle-Miller, flipping carefully through the blank pages. "But we do know that he never fully recovered from the gassing."

Thistle was sent from France to a convalescence centre in England, where he met nurse Violet Rodda, who would later become his war bride. The two married eight months after they met, says Thistle-Miller. The newly married couple lived in England for the next four years, where Thistle continued to fight in the war, and was even present for the infamous battle at Vimy Ridge. When the war ended in 1919, the two moved to Newfoundland to work for the Hudson's Bay Company.

"My grandfather remained dedicated to the service upon his return to Canada," says Thistle-Miller. "He never let that part of himself go."

Thistle enlisted with the Canadian Scottish Regiment (Princes Mary's) while working for the Hudson's Bay Company. When World War II broke out, he worked at the rank of Captain in intelligence and communication services in Canada, even spending time training U.S. soldiers on war survival skills.

"My grandparents were together until 1959, when my grandfather died of heart complications at the age of 69," she says. "He survived the war and stayed committed to the forces, but he suffered. We know his story thanks to the journal."

For Thistle-Miller, the journal has become one of the only means of uncovering the secrets of the stern, serious man in photographs she wondered about as a little girl.

Ralph Thistle, centre, gathers with his family and their beloved Collie in Canada, early 1940s.

Coastal defence of Vancouver 101 years ago

Maj(R) Peter Moogk
Contributor

Does "Old Fort UBC" sound a little far-fetched?

It's not.

In 1914, part of the University of British Columbia's (UBC's) Point Grey campus was officially designated a "fortress area."

The history of the fortifications on Point Grey began in the summer of 1914. When war was declared against Germany in July, Vancouver had no permanent defences. Naval forces based at Esquimalt, on Vancouver Island, consisted of Her Majesty's Canadian Ship (HMCS) Rainbow, which was an Apollo-class protected cruiser, an obsolete light cruiser used for training, and two British sloops-of-war, then in Mexican waters.

Between these two and their home port lay the Seiner Majestät Schiff (SMS – German for His Majesty's Ship) Leipzig, a German cruiser.

When HMCS Rainbow left with a crew of volunteers to rescue the sloops, British Columbians were thrown into a panic. Another German warship, SMS Nürnberg, was reported to be steaming toward the coast, and there were four other raiders on the loose in the Pacific. There was nothing to prevent them from attacking the seaports of B.C.

The Canadian Army sends guns from Ontario by rail

HMCS Rainbow and the British Navy sloops, Her Majesty's Ship (HMS) Algerine, a Phoenix-class sloop, and HMS Shearwater, a Condor-class sloop, returned safely in mid-August.

HMS Shearwater at once unloaded two naval guns for positioning in historic Stanley Park, which was named for Lord Frederick Stanley, Governor General of Canada in 1888.

Two five-inch guns from the Cobourg Heavy Battery Canadian Garrison Artillery arrived by rail from Ontario. This Battery later became part of present-day 33rd Medium Artillery Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.

According to one eyewitness, "drawn by trucks, the gun carriages rumbled through downtown streets and out to Point Grey, where positions had been prepared about half a mile east of the present washout gully." As the guns were rolled into position, one was found to have a cracked breech-block; sabotage was suspected but never proven.

The German scare subsided that autumn with the arrival of more friendly warships at Esquimalt. One of these, ironically, was the Izumo, a Japanese armoured cruiser supplied under the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of 1902. With this reassurance, the Point Grey guns were withdrawn. The Stanley Park fortifications were reinforced, but with the return of peace in 1918, Vancouver reverted to its peacetime footing.

Major (Retired) Peter Moogk, PhD, is a retired Professor Emeritus of history at UBC and Curator of the Museum and Archives of the 15th Field Regiment, Royal Canadian Artillery.

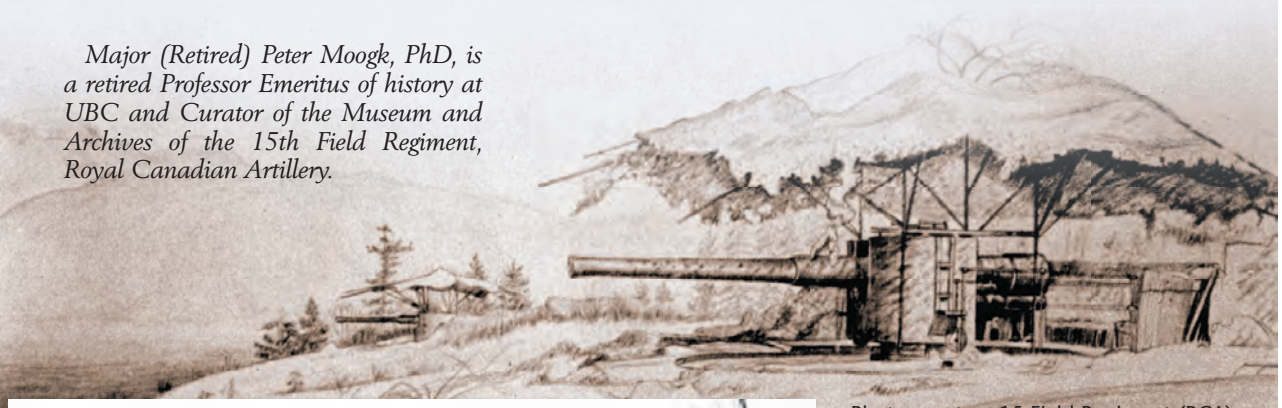


Photo courtesy 15 Field Regiment (RCA) Museum and Archives.

Background: A sketch by war artist Orville Fisher of the number one and number two positions of the Point Grey Battery in 1943.

Inset: This BL 6-inch gun, painted in camouflage, was part of the wartime fortifications constructed on the University of British Columbia's Point Grey Campus.

Canadian Time Line

Veterans Affairs Canada

October 11, 1899
South African War begins

October 30, 1899
First Canadian soldiers leave for South Africa

February 18, 1900
Battle of Paardeberg begins

November 7, 1900
Battle of Leliefontein

March 31, 1902
Battle of Hart's River

May 31, 1902
South African War ends

August 4, 1914
First World War Begins

April 22, 1915
Canadians see first major action at Ypres

July 1, 1916
1st Newfoundland Regiment goes over the top at Beaumont-Hamel

April 9, 1917
Canadians take Vimy Ridge

November, 1917
Canadians capture Passchendaele in muddy battle

December 17,
1917Some Canadian women first get to vote in a federal election

November 11, 1918
Armistice signed ending the war

September 10, 1939
Canada officially enters the Second World War

August 19, 1942
Canadians take part in Raid on Dieppe

July 10, 1943
Canadians come ashore in Sicily

June 6, 1944
Allies come ashore in Normandy on D-Day

May 5, 1945
Canadians complete Liberation of the Netherlands

August 15, 1945
V-J Day: official end of the Second World War

June 25, 1950
Canadians enter Korean War

April 24-25, 1951
Canadians see action in the Battle of Kapyong

October 2, 1952
HMCS Iroquois hit off Korean coast

July 27, 1953
The Korea Armistice Agreement is signed ending three years of fighting

November 24, 1956
First Canadian peacekeepers set foot in Egypt

August 9, 1974
Nine Canadian Forces Peacekeepers die in the Middle East

1988
World's UN Peacekeepers awarded Nobel Peace Prize

August 2, 1990
Iraq invades Kuwait, setting off the Persian Gulf War

1992 through 2003
Canada participates in several missions to support peace in the Balkans region

2001
Canadian soldiers deploy to Afghanistan

September 2006
Canadians see intense combat in Afghanistan during Operation Medusa

January 2010
Canadian Forces deploy to earthquake-ravaged Haiti

March 2014
End of Canada's mission to Afghanistan

Battle of Britain: Oak Bay boy, hero pilot over London Skies

Major William March
RCAF Historian

George Henry Corbett's parents came to Canada in 1914 and settled in Saskatchewan, where he was born on Nov. 4, 1919.

Around his tenth birthday, the family moved to Oak Bay, British Columbia, and it was in this small coastal community that he graduated from high school in 1935.

An avid builder of model aircraft and possessing a keen interest in flying, Corbett took advantage of a family holiday to England to apply to the de Havilland Aircraft Company's Aeronautical Technical School at Hatfield, Hertfordshire.

Even with a busy schedule studying aircraft design and manufacture, he found the time to join the Royal Air Force (RAF) Volunteer Reserve in November 1937.

Two years later, with his studies nearly complete, Corbett was visiting family in British Columbia when Britain declared war on Germany on Sept. 3, 1939. He immediately returned to England and the RAF.

After completing his training at No. 9 Advanced Flying Training School, he was posted to No. 7 Operational Training Unit at Hawarden, Cheshire, on July 7, 1940. This unit focused on one thing and one thing only: the training of Spitfire fighter pilots.

A combination of personal talent and operational need meant Corbett's stay was short. On July 26, the young Canadian found himself reporting to No. 66 Squadron at Coltishall, Norfolk.

The squadron had already engaged the Luftwaffe in the skies above Dunkirk and was ready to "have a go at Jerry" over home turf. Although Corbett participated in a number of combat patrols, his first true combat experience came on Sept. 9, 1940, and it was not a pleasant experience.

Pilot Officer George Corbett's family commissioned a stained glass window in St. Mary the Virgin Anglican church in Oak Bay, British Columbia. It is the only one dedicated to a member of the local community.

Pilot Officer George Corbett relaxes in uniform in this undated photograph.

Dodging heavy rain showers, Pilot Officer Corbett was part of a group attacking German bombers, escorted by enemy fighters, intent on attacking London. After already damaging a Messerschmitt 109, he was positioning his aircraft for a rear attack on a bomber when he was bounced by three German fighters.

As the cockpit filled with smoke and the controls jammed, he found himself in a severely damaged, uncontrolled aircraft plummeting toward the ground in a tight spiral dive. At 12,000 feet (3,658 metres), the Canadian pilot bailed out, suffering a slight injury in the process.

Corbett quickly returned to the fray, and on Sept. 27 he and his squadron mates intercepted German bombers attacking London. In the midst of heavy British defensive fire from anti-aircraft guns below, he got a quick burst into one bomber before breaking off the attack and leaving the damaged enemy aircraft to other RAF fighters.

He then selected a lone Junkers 88 as his next target, closed to within yards of the German aircraft, and opened fire. The enemy aircraft fell away, its port engine burning fiercely, but the smoke was so thick that Corbett had to break off the attack.

He had little time to enjoy his victory because his Spitfire was damaged by friendly fire when an artillery shell burst nearby, destroying one elevator and riddling the fuselage and starboard wing with shrapnel. He skillfully executed a forced landing in the London district of Orpington, emerging from his damaged but repairable Spitfire with a new-found respect for anti-aircraft gunners, and a Junkers 88 claimed as destroyed. Two London bobbies who came to his assistance had witnessed the combat, and confirmed Corbett's claim.

More combat followed, but this young man who had survived being shot down twice would not be so lucky the third time.

On Oct. 8, 1940, Pilot Officer Corbett, wearing a new watch sent by his parents as a 21st birthday gift, was climbing with his squadron to intercept yet another formation of German raiders when they were surprised by a large number of Messerschmitt 109s. In a slashing attack, Corbett and one other 66 Squadron pilot were shot down near Bayford Marches, Upchurch; neither pilot survived.

According to Mike Gunnill, a freelance writer in the United Kingdom, on that day the Reverend William Joseph Wright was at his church, St. Margaret of Antioch, and witnessed the dogfight. When the Pilot Officer Corbett's aircraft crashed, the clergyman ran to the site, hoping to provide assistance. But "…it was clear, due to the bullet damage around the cockpit, that George Corbett had been killed instantly before the crash. [Wright] offered prayers and a blessing, and stayed until the body was recovered. The pilot's own parachute was used as a shroud."

Back in Oak Bay, in a cruel twist of fate that often happens in wartime, Pilot Officer Corbett's mother, Mabel, received a letter from her son days after being officially informed that he had been killed. Gunnill notes the young Canadian tried to comfort his family's fears in a letter that made light of his two earlier brushes with death, and explained the importance of what he was part of.

Corbett wrote, *"Having got out OK, my confidence has tremendously increased and I want you to be confident also. We're seeing plenty of action here every day and I'll be back in the fight tomorrow. The Jerries are a long way from getting supremacy in the air, and until they get it, there'll be no invasion."*

Pilot Officer Corbett's sacrifice touched people on two continents.

In Canada, his family commissioned a stained glass window in St. Mary the Virgin Anglican Church in Oak Bay. The window depicts Pilot Officer Corbett in his RAF uniform. He wears a life preserver and clutches a flying helmet and earphones, and gazes upward at an image depicting the Ascension, when, the Bible teaches, Jesus rose to Heaven following his crucifixion.

Amid a number of impressive stained glass windows, this one stands out because it is the most modern, and because it is the only window dedicated to a member of the local community.

On the Sunday closest to Battle of Britain Day (Sept. 15), a single rose is placed beneath Pilot Officer Corbett's window.

An ocean away, in St. Mary the Virgin churchyard at Upchurch, Kent, where Pilot Officer Corbett is buried, a community tends to the young Canadian's grave site, remembering a life freely given so many years ago.

Photo by Mike Gunnill

The tending of Pilot Officer George Corbett's grave in St. Mary the Virgin churchyard at Upchurch, Kent, England, is a community affair, in remembrance of a life given so many years ago.

A profile of courage: Young aviator survives aerial battles

Major William March
RCAF Historian

Jean-Paul Joseph Desloges was born in Gatineau, Québec, on April 25, 1913, but spent a large portion of his life just across the river in Ottawa.

A talented athlete, he seemed to have been born with a pair of skates strapped to his feet. His love of hockey led him to the University of Ottawa for his education because it allowed him to play on the varsity team.

Upon graduation, he began a career with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (where he played hockey), but, like many of his contemporaries, he was attracted to the excitement of aviation.

So, in October 1937, at the ripe old age of 24, he enrolled in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) as a Provisional Pilot Officer.

After successfully completing his training in Borden and Trenton, Ontario, he received his wings in November 1938. For the next 18 months or so Desloges flew at every opportunity, but in May 1940 he found himself part of an expanded No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron (it had absorbed the personnel of No. 115 Squadron) in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

It was to be a relatively short stay in the Maritimes because he and his squadron mates boarded steam passenger ship Duchess of Atholl on June 8, 1940, and headed for England.

Under the command of Squadron Leader E.A. McNab, Desloges and the rest of the Canadians trained hard to prepare themselves for combat against the much more experienced German Luftwaffe.

Declared operationally ready on Aug. 17, No. 1 (RCAF) Squadron [so designated to prevent confusion with No. 1 Squadron of the Royal Air Force (RAF)] was transferred to an airfield at Northolt on the western fringe of the London metropolitan area. The Canadians were eager to join the fight.

The Battle of Britain had been going on for more than a month, with almost daily incursions by German aircraft. During this phase of the battle, the enemy was attacking RAF aerodromes to great effect. Although the Canadians were scrambled several times to intercept enemy aircraft, they did not manage to close with the enemy.

One can only image the combination of eagerness and nervousness within the pilots, aware as they were of the savage fighting going on all around them.

Well trained, the Canadians wanted to do their bit, but they were sobered by the knowledge this was for real and Allied air personnel were dying every day.

Adrenalin pumping and nerves taut, they were scrambled yet again on Aug. 24 in anticipation of in-bound enemy aircraft.

The fight that day was to be a tragic introduction to the realities of war for Desloges and the rest of the squadron. Patrolling at 10,000 feet over Tangmere airfield, the Canadians spotted three twin-engine aircraft below, heading toward Portsmouth, the target of a major German raid.

The Canadians, grouped together into two sections, began a diving attack. Squadron leader McNab recognized the German aircraft were in fact RAF Blenheim bombers and his section broke away before opening fire, but the remaining Hurricanes continued with the assault. Flying Officers A.D. Nesbitt, A. Yuile and W.P. Sprenger claimed a Junkers 88 damaged, while Flight Lieutenant G.R. McGregor and Desloges claimed the destruction of another.

Upon landing, their elation with these victories quickly turned to dismay when it was revealed they had in fact shot down two RAF aircraft, one of which crashed into the sea, killing all three crewmen.

A 1940 photograph of Flying Officer Jean-Paul Desloges.

Fight Lieutenant Jean-Paul Desloges waves from his aircraft on January 22, 1941.

McNab spoke for Desloges and the rest of the unit when he described it as "the lowest point of my life."

The growing intensity of German attacks precluded a long period of reflection on this tragic mistake because No. 1 (RCAF) Squadron, now flying out of North Weald, was thrown into the thick of the fray.

During its second patrol on Aug. 26, the squadron engaged a group of German Dornier 215 bombers. As the enemy's fighter escort were drawn away by another RAF squadron, the Canadians pounced on the remaining Luftwaffe aircraft. In short order three of the enemy aircraft were destroyed, and a further four damaged, but the contest was not all one-sided; accurate defensive fire knocked three Canadian Hurricanes from the sky with the death of one of the pilots, Flying Officer R.L. Edwards.

Desloges' aircraft was badly damaged, but he skillfully force-landed the stricken machine, walking away shaken but with a new-found respect for the sting of German bombers.

Five days later, on Aug. 31, 1940, Desloges' Battle of Britain came to an abrupt end. It was during the squadron's second combat of the day, the first having gone distinctly against the Canadians when they were "bounced" by Germans fighters, losing three of their number – fortunately, with injuries only.

In the early evening, Desloges and the remaining Canadian pilots took part in the interception over Dover of a large body of German bombers escorted by fighters that refused to be drawn away.

In the ensuing melee, the Canadians claimed several German aircraft destroyed or damaged. Desloges became the only Canadian casualty when a cannon shell tore through his cockpit hood, tearing off his helmet, goggles and oxygen mask. Dazed, with his aircraft on fire, he managed to struggle out of the falling aircraft, but suffered severe burns, especially to his hands.

It took him months to recover from his wounds and, after a stay in hospital in England, he was sent back to Canada to complete his rehabilitation.

Having survived the Battle of Britain, Desloges, like so many others, would not survive the war. On May 8, 1944, Wing Commander Desloges, part of a Canadian delegation working with the French in Africa, was undertaking a tour of French air training establishments when the aircraft he was in crashed on takeoff at Rabat, Morocco, killing everyone on board.

He is buried in the British Military Cemetery at Dely Ibrahim, Algeria.

In a hospital in England, Flight Lieutenant Jean-Paul Desloges recuperates from burns he received on when he struggled to exit his burning aircraft.

Above: **Squadron Leader Jean-Paul Desloges explains the workings of a Browning machine gun to trainees at No. 3 Air Training Corps in Montreal, Quebec, on June 11, 1941.**

Below: **The men of No. 1 (RCAF) Squadron sit for a photograph at RAF Croydon, England, in July 1940.** Photos courtesy DND

The War Amps build a lasting legacy

Doug Cushway lost both legs below the knee while serving in the Second World War. He received his first pair of artificial legs on his 21st birthday and has never looked back.

Cushway went on to have a career in agriculture, raise a family and inspire others by skating, curling, golfing and cross-country skiing. He has devoted his lifetime of experience to The War Amps and child amputees, holding many positions over the years,at the national and branch levels of the Association.

Through The War Amps, Cushway and his fellow war amputees have built a lasting legacy for child amputees in Canada. The Association's tradition of "amputees helping amputees" will continue through the Child Amputee (CHAMP) Program which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

For Angie Ducharme, a graduate of CHAMP, war amputees have been her role models.

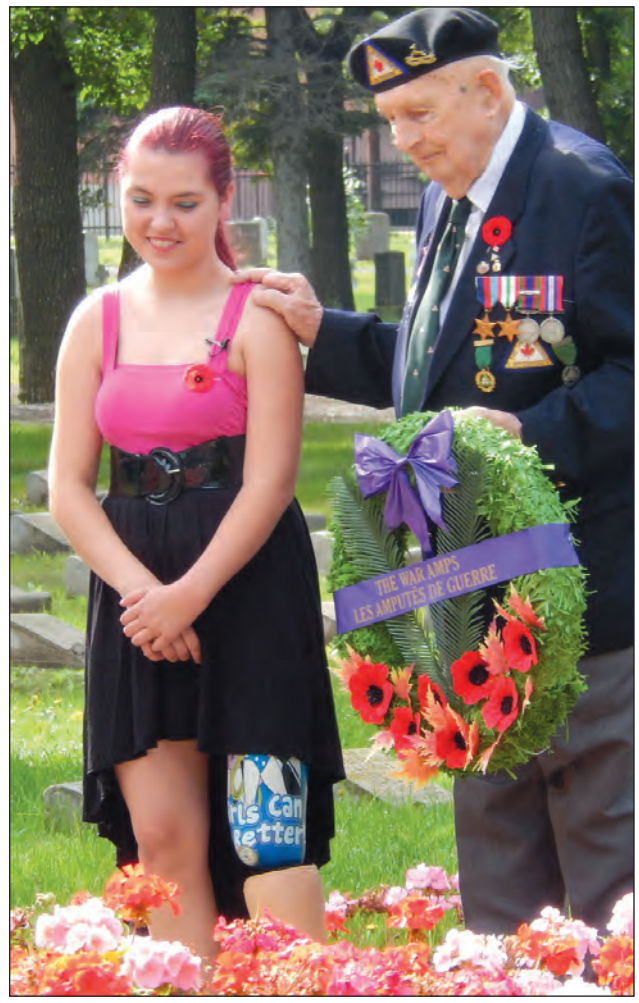
"I feel really privileged to know war amputees like Doug and for everything they've helped me with while growing up in CHAMP," she says. "Some of the things they've taught me, I hope I can teach to the younger Champs."

Cushway used to lay a wreath every year on behalf of The War Amps at his local Remembrance Day ceremony, but has proudly passed on this tradition to Angie and other members of CHAMP. As part of The War Amps Operation Legacy, Angie helps carry on the message of Remembrance and educates others about the sacrifices of Canada's veterans.

Calling it "one good thing that came out of the war," Cushway says, "The CHAMP Program has done a lot since it started. It makes me feel very good that it's still going strong today."

The War Amps programs are made possible through donations to its Key Tag Service. Donors may also choose to leave a gift or charitable bequest in their wills to help The War Amps continue to meet its commitments to amputees long into the future.

To learn more about Doug's story, visit The War Amps YouTube Channel to watch "A Lifetime of Service." This video won Gold at the 2015 Questar Award in New York.



Doug Cushway and Angie Ducharme lay a wreath on behalf of The War Amps. The Association continues to serve war amputees, and all Canadian amputees, including children.

Royal BC Museum Remembrance displays

"Cold all night. Feet and hands felt it badly. Nothing doing all night. Rockets, maxim gun and rifle fire. Every time one came over we ducked but on the whole were not greatly worried."

So wrote Trooper Joe Shires from the European front line to Victoria-based librarian Alma Russell 100 years ago, on Oct. 24, 1915.

Russell, with whom Shires had worked with before the war, is one of the soldiers whose handwritten letters, diaries and scrapbook pages have been transcribed for the Royal BC Museum during its Transcribe project.

Projects such as Transcribe are just one of the ways the Royal BC Museum helps keep the war-time experiences of British Columbian soldiers and nurses vivid and accessible to all.

As Remembrance Day nears, the Museum will embark on a series of special events and educational experiences to commemorate wars past, and honour the experiences and lives of men and women from B.C. who served.

• On Tuesday, Nov. 10, join the Naden Band of the Royal Canadian Navy for a musical tribute: Lest We Forget: A Musical Tribute to The Great War. The concert will take place from 7 to 9 p.m.

• On Wednesday, Nov. 11, the Museum will play host to three special Remembrance Day performances.

12:15 – 12:45 p.m., the Victoria Children's Choir will perform music on themes of war and peace, including songs from the time of both World Wars, patriotic Canadian songs and more recent compositions expressing the common desire for peace and human solidarity.

1 – 1:30 pm, Pacific Opera Victoria will stage scenes from a version of Mary's Wedding, a new Canadian opera commemorating the First World War and its impact on a generation of Canadian youth. Join dynamic musicologist and public speaker Robert Holliston as he introduces scenes from Mary's Wedding, which will be performed by young opera singers.

2 – 2:45 pm, the Story Theatre Company and the Royal BC Museum offer The Call Went Out, a special presentation of music, songs and poetry of the Great War period, mixed with letters from the young men who travelled over to the trenches. As letters from the BC Archives, written by local soldiers, served as source material, the script and music have a decidedly British Columbian flavour.

All these commemorative events take place in in Clifford Carl Hall, on the main floor of the Royal BC Museum, and are free of charge. For more information about these and other events, please visit royalbcmuseum.bc.ca.

All performances on Remembrance Day have been funded in part by the Veterans Affairs Canada Community Partnership Fund.

Sacred tradition of the Eagle Staff

Natalie Flynn
Army Public Affairs

The Department of National Defence (DND)/ Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) Eagle Staff, a symbol of unity among Aboriginal women and men in the defence community, will be present at this year's Remembrance Day Ceremony in Ottawa.

A current serving member has the honour of being this year's Eagle Staff Carrier for the ceremony and will escort various Aboriginal Veterans Associations in the laying of wreaths at the National War Memorial.

The Aboriginal Eagle Staff was reinvigorated and ceremoniously recognized by Lieutenant-General Marquis Hainse, Commander Canadian Army and DND/CAF Champion for Aboriginal Peoples, in June. The ceremony took place during the Defence Aboriginal Advisory Group's (DAAG) 20th anniversary celebration event at the National Aboriginal Veterans Monument in Confederation Park in Ottawa. The Staff travelled from its current location in Halifax for the occasion.

"It is a tremendous honour to receive the Eagle Staff. This sacred symbol is a treasured tradition that I promise to uphold and carry with great humility and respect," said LGen Hainse.

The tradition of the Eagle Staff has been passed down from generation to generation. In Aboriginal cultures, the Eagle Staff represents various meanings, spiritual entities, nations, clans, languages, medicines and healing. It is believed that eagles communicate directly with the Creator, making eagles themselves, their feathers and their images highly revered by First Peoples.

From a non-Aboriginal perspective, the Staff can be compared to a national flag: it represents people, states, governments, regiments and battle honours. Thus, it is an honoured and sacred symbol.

Two former CAF members were instrumental in creating the DND/CAF Eagle Staff in 2002, and in working to facilitate its presence as a traveling emblem of unity among all Aboriginal Peoples in the defence community.

"The DND/CAF Eagle Staff was a vision that was shared by myself and Petty Officer Second Class (Retired) Chris Innes," said CPO2 (Ret'd) Debbie Eisan. "This vision represented two important factors. The first is to remind us to never forget the sacrifices and courage of Aboriginal men and women who volunteered and fought for Turtle Island during time of war. [Turtle Island is a symbolic term for North America.] This Eagle Staff will always ensure that their legacy will not be forgotten. Secondly, it came at a time when Aboriginal members of the CAF and DND needed to feel empowered and to maintain a sense of pride and honor of our native ancestry."

Master Seaman Arnold Stewart, who is from Nisga'a Nation on the west coast, is the designated Keeper of the DND/CAF Eagle Staff and holds the responsibility for its care.

"Before carrying an Eagle Staff, one must receive teachings and guidance by a group of designated veterans and warriors," said MS Stewart. "Staff carriers must possess a strong and positive mind because it is believed that the spirits of the Staff listen and connect with the carrier."

An Eagle Staff is made entirely of nature's gifts, such as tree, animal and bird materials. They are generally four to seven feet long with eagle feathers attached. Each Eagle Staff is unique and specifically designed for different groups and purposes. The DND/CAF Eagle Staff was fashioned from ash wood and put together in Halifax. Key features of the Staff include:

- An eagle carving, made by the Mi'Kmaw People of Newfoundland, which graces the top of the staff, with the bird flying towards the Creator to offer the prayers of all those assembled nearby;
- 13 eagle feathers, representing each calendar moon and First Peoples of every province and territory;
- The Canadian Flag with an eagle feather, followed by each provincial and territorial flag representing those who share this land with us;
- A Métis sash, an ash bow and a narwhal tusk representing the concept of "Many Peoples, One Nation"; and
- A depiction of a blackened hand, that represents the legacy, guidance and strength of Aboriginal Veterans and which is meant to honour all those who came before us.

"A particularly distinct feature of this Staff includes a 'Heart of Ethics', meaning that when the ash tree was shaped and sanded, it unveiled the layering of the three symbolic hearts in one, which always reminds us of our seven grandfather teachings of love, respect, honesty, wisdom, truth, humility and courage," said CPO2 (Ret'd) Eisan.

"These are values that we all aspire to exemplify in our lives and within our communities, including our military family," she concludes.

With files from Captain Caroline Massicott.

POW camp captured in art

Courtesy Veterans Affairs Canada

This story was written by Gail Delaney, the daughter of a Hong Kong prisoner of War. Her father, John "Jack" Burton was captured by the enemy in Hong Kong before his ship even docked. He spent four long years as a prisoner of war living in horrific conditions. But, in one of the prison camps, he created a friendship with a fellow prisoner and artist, William Allister.

Two paintings. Two lives. One shared experience. This story of prison camp art proves the human spirit cannot be crushed, even in the darkest moments.

As a 22-year-old in Toronto, my father, John Burton joined the military to see the world. In the fall of 1941, 1,975 Canadian soldiers were sent to Hong Kong. After Japan's inevitable entry into the war, the leaders knew there was no hope of victory, nor of evacuation, nor of relief – and they were right.

On Christmas Day, 17 days after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the massively outnumbered Allied troops admitted defeat. Of the Canadian troops, 290 had been killed, and 1,675 had been taken prisoners of war. What they endured for the next 44 months in no way resembled the conventional definition of the term.

My dad was one of those POWs who rarely spoke of the four-year nightmare, only at times to guilt us into eating our supper because he could not tolerate waste – especially when food was involved.

Another POW and friend of my dad's, William Allister from British Columbia, was an artist and writer. The paintings depicted are ones

that William painted for my dad in 1942. He used a piece of tent canvas, bristles from a shoe brush wired onto a stick, and for paint he used crank case oil and cranberries for colouring.

One picture depicts their guarded housing units, and the other picture shows a sinking ship in Hong Kong Bay.

The paintings were well hidden until they dried. Then, my Dad rolled them up and sewed them into the inside of his pant leg where they stayed for over three years.

> ***He used a piece of tent canvas, bristles from a shoe brush wired onto a stick, and for paint he used crank case oil and cranberries for colouring.***

By the time of liberation in September 1945, 267 of the POWs had died and the rest were barely clinging to a semblance of life.

The POWs were all shipped to Vancouver where they were hospitalized, and thoroughly evaluated mentally and physically. Upon dad's return to Toronto, he had the two canvases cleaned and framed. They hung over our living room couch all my life.

After both my parents passed away, I brought them to my home on Prince Edward Island where they still hang, above my living room couch, in silent memory.

Red Cross worker aided Korean War injured

Rachel Lallouz
Staff Writer

Growing up in Quebec City during the 1930s to a tight-knit French family, Jacquelyn Van Campen, now 87, never suspected she would one day find herself half way across the world, working for the Red Cross in Japan and Korea during the aftermath of the Korean War.

Van Campen was finishing off her Masters of Social Work at Lavalle University in the spring of 1953, when her thesis supervisor approached her with an opportunity. The Red Cross had recently asked the university if they had any new social workers who would be willing to travel to Asia to support remaining Canadian troops in the area.

"I agreed to go immediately," says Van Campen. "But my supervisor said 'Number one: there's just been a war. Number two: you don't speak any English.' I said: 'Number one: I can't do anything about the war, and number two: I will learn to speak English in Japan.' Which I did."

Van Campen had spent the past few years dutifully saving for a trip to France, and as she admits, Japan and Korea might as well have been on another planet.

"But although I was very shy back then, I had always been interested in people. I liked the soldiers that were stationed in Quebec City, and I wanted to learn Japanese," she says.

Despite her desire to go, getting accepted to be a Red Cross social worker was another story. Van Campen had to get an English classmate to write her letter of interest. Despite the language barrier, she was offered an interview. As it turns out, a high number of soldiers from the 22nd Regiment of Quebec were still stationed throughout Japan and Korea, as the war did not officially end until July 1953. The Red Cross needed Van Campen's ability to speak French more than she thought. She breezed through an informal interview, and was accepted in May 1953.

"Everything after that point went by like a blur. We had to leave in September, and I was measured for a uniform, and had to have a medical. But it never occurred to me to prepare for Japan's culture or different language. I knew I would just be thrown into it," she says.

Van Campen boarded a commercial plane with Canadian officers for the 20 hour flight to Tokyo, stopping in Toronto, Vancouver, and the Aleutian Islands to refuel. She also met two other young women hired on.

"None of us had ever worked for the Red Cross before – I didn't even know how to wear my uniform properly," she laughs. "I held my hat under my arms because I was worried I'd put it on wrong; one girl put hers in her purse, and another wore hers straight on her head like a chef."

Sitting on the plane, the three women were still in the dark about their specific duties upon arrival, and none had received any formal training for the position.

"I don't think I was nervous though," Van Campen recalls. "I just remember being very excited."

They touched down in Tokyo just under two months after the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed to officially conclude the Korean War. Van Campen was 25 years old and ready for an adventure.

The three were dropped off at a mostly Australian base in Ebisu, a major district of Tokyo. It was here they learned they would be working at one of the Maple Leaf Clubs – rest and recuperation centres set up throughout Asia to provide Commonwealth soldiers with relief. When soldiers needed a break from fighting on the front lines, they were sent from Korea to the centres for relaxation time. The three women would be transferred every three months to a similar location on a different base.

"I learned how to speak English in the Maple Leaf Club of Japan, of all the unlikely places in the world," says Van Campen. "And I learned fast, because part of our job was to make conversation with the relaxing troops."

Her primary responsibility was to provide the soldiers with comfort and varying degrees of emotional support.

"I don't think I was nervous though, I just remember being very excited."

"We talked about their families, and memories of being home in Canada. We wrote their letters for them, because a number of them couldn't write very well. We listened to them play music, or sat with them and read the paper."

Bestowed with the rank of officer, Van Campen says she always felt safe at work. She describes her relationship with the soldiers as similar to being a sister or cousin.

"The soldiers told me stories all of the time, especially of the hardships they had experienced during the war, and they showed me pictures of old friends."

Van Campen recalls how many soldiers would show her a 'Dear John' letter if they got one, a common type of letter written by a girlfriend or wife back in Canada ending the relationship.

"Who else could they show that to? Some of them lost their best pals in the war," she says. "They could talk to us and tell us their stories. They needed to. They needed someone to listen who wasn't in the army."

But outside of the cozy club, the streets of Japan were filled with rubble.

"It was complete devastation, and the Japanese people were so poor," she says.

The grim scene didn't stop Van Campen from exploring the city.

"I fell in love with the city after only a week. I loved the culture, Japanese theatre, the architecture of the low, sloping roofs and short buildings built only a story high in preparation for impending earthquakes. I loved the kimonos and the look of the little children, and the music."

Walking to her church on Sunday mornings, Van Campen could see the top of Mount Fuji rising into the clouds. Now, she says, the pollution and high-rise buildings make it impossible to even catch a glimpse of the infamous mountain.

From Tokyo, Van Campen was transferred to a Maple Leaf Club close to the Korean front, on the border between North and South Korea.

"Even though the fighting was over, the climate was a little more dangerous," she says. "We had early curfews, and had a driver take us to the club and back each day. We weren't allowed to walk anywhere because of the mines."

In Korea, Van Campen supported a mix of American, Australian, British and Canadian soldiers. Some she talked to had never gotten the chance to fight in the war by the time they arrived in Korea. Others had been to the front many times.

"The prevailing feeling in the air was the desire of the soldiers to go home. You'd think Seoul was post World War Two Europe. There was simply nothing left there," she says.

Van Campen continued moving from rest station to rest station, listening to the stories of soldiers and writing their letters for the remainder of her year-long contract.

Her love of Japanese and Korean culture lead her to extend her stay by another six months.

"This experience made me a Canadian," she says. "Before, I was a Canadian from Quebec. After, I became a Canadian from Canada. It made me very proud of my country and very self-assured as a person. It changed my life in that way – nothing was insurmountable anymore."

When Van Campen finally finished her extended contract, she began travelling the globe. She spent five years hopping from Australia to South Africa, England, India, and New Guinea, to name a few countries, before returning to Canada in 1958. During her travels she took positions as a librarian, waitress, English teacher, secretary, and of course, social worker.

"Even though the fighting was over, the climate was a little more dangerous. We had early curfews, and had a driver take us to the club and back each day. We weren't allowed to walk anywhere because of the mines."

Women at War

Veterans Affairs Canada

During the Second World War, the role of women in Canadian society changed dramatically. Canada needed women to pitch in and support the war effort from their homes, to work at jobs that were traditionally held by men, and to serve in the military. Canadian women enthusiastically embraced their new roles and responsibilities, and helped contribute to the success of Canada's Victory Campaign.

Roll up Your Sleeves for Victory!

During the war, many women took a wide variety of civilian jobs that had once been filled by men. Canada had its own version of "Rosie the Riveter," the symbolic working woman who laboured in factories to help the war effort.

Women worked shoulder-to-shoulder with men in factories, on airfields, and on farms. They built parts for ships and aircraft and manufactured ammunition. They drove buses, taxis, and streetcars. This level of female participation in the workplace was a first for Canada - thousands of Canadian women proving they had the skills, strength, and ability to do the work that men did.

Out of a total Canadian population of 11 million people, only about 600,000 Canadian women held permanent jobs when the war started. During the war, their numbers doubled to 1,200,000.

At the peak of wartime employment in 1943-44, 439,000 women worked in the service sector, 373,000 in manufacturing and 4,000 in construction.

Women's smaller physical size and manual dexterity helped them develop a great reputation for fine precision work in electronics, optics, and instrument assembly.

With their sons overseas, many farm women had to take on extra work. One Alberta mother of nine sons - all of them either in the army or away working in factories - drove the tractor, plowed the fields, put up hay, and hauled grain to elevators, along with tending her garden, raising chickens, pigs and turkeys, and canning hundreds of jars of fruits and vegetables.

Women who worked with lumberjacks and loggers during the war were called "lumberjills."

Canada's Elsie Gregory MacGill was the first woman in the world to graduate as an aeronautical engineer. She worked for Fairchild Aircraft Limited during the war. In 1940, her team's design and production methods were turning out more than 100 Hurricane combat aircraft per month.

Keeping the Home Fires Burning

During the war, women extended their charitable work to the war effort. They knitted socks, scarves, and mitts and prepared parcels for Canadians overseas, gathered materials for scrap collection drives, and helped people displaced by the war by providing clothes and setting up refugee centres.

To deal with wartime shortages, women became experts at doing more with less. They made their own clothes (sometimes even using an old parachute to make a wedding dress) and planted Victory Gardens to supply much-needed fruits and vegetables to their families and communities. In short, women - acting in the traditional role of homemakers - gave, saved, and made do.

As part of the war effort, many commodities in Canada were rationed (a limit placed on the amount that could be used). Weekly rations of food included 1 1/3 ounces of tea, 5 1/3 ounces of coffee, 1/2 pound of sugar and 1/2 pound of butter. Some other rationed items included meat, whiskey, and gasoline.

Although household products of every kind were hard to come by, homemakers - conscious of the need for aluminum for the aircraft industry - often donated perfectly good aluminum cookware to scrap metal drives.

Many women joined war relief clubs which were formed to improve the morale of the troops overseas. These clubs packaged canvas "ditty bags" with items such as chocolate, sewing kits, and razor blades.

To save fabric and buttons for uniforms, the government forbade many 'extras' on manufactured clothing, such as cuffs on pants, any hem in excess of two inches, double-breasted jackets, flap pockets, and more than nine buttons on a dress.

So much of Canada's silk and nylon was required for the war effort that women could not find the seamed stockings that were then in style. Some fashion-conscious women resorted to paint, drawing lines up the back of their legs, to simulate the look of stockings.

Comrades in Arms

Many Canadian women wanted to play an active role in the war and lobbied the government to form military organizations for women.

In 1941-42, the military was forever changed as it created its own women's forces. Women were now able, for the first time in our history, to serve Canada in uniform. More than 50,000 women served in the armed forces during the Second World War.

- The Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWACS) had 21,600 members.
- The Women's Division, Royal Canadian Air Force (WDs) had 17,400 members.
- The Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (Wrens) had 7,100 members.

-Women in the services filled many positions, including mechanics, parachute riggers, wireless operators, clerks, and photographers.

- 4,480 Nursing Sisters (as Canadian military nurses were known) served in the war - 3,656 in the Canadian Women's Army Corps, 481 in the Women's Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force and 343 in the Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service. Many of these women found themselves within range of enemy guns and some lost their lives.
- Nursing Sister Margaret Brooke was awarded the Order of the British Empire for her heroic efforts to save her fellow Nursing Sister Agnes Wilkie after the S.S. *Caribou*, the ferry they were taking to Newfoundland, was torpedoed in the Cabot Strait in 1942.

Allied nations received a British commemorative medal

Ruthanne Urquhart
Air Force PA

Retired Air Commodore David Prowse, Royal Air Forces Association, presents Brigadier-General Matthew Overton, commander of the Canadian Defence Liaison Staff at Canada House in London, U.K., and Lieutenant-Colonel Tressa Home, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff assistant Air Force advisor at Canada House, with commemorative Battle of Britain medals.

In this 75th anniversary year of the Battle of Britain, two Canadian Armed Forces officers have accepted commemorative medals presented by the United Kingdom's Royal Air Forces Association to nations that took part in the battle that altered the course of the Second World War.

Brigadier-General Matthew Overton, commander of the Canadian Defence Liaison Staff at Canada House in London, U.K., and Lieutenant-Colonel Tressa Home, Vice-Chief of the Defence Staff assistant Air Force advisor at Canada House, received two medals, on behalf of Canada and Newfoundland*, in a ceremony at the Royal Air Force Club in London Sept. 8. Retired Air Commodore David Prowse, Royal Air Forces Association director of membership and operations, made the presentation.

"The effort and sacrifice of Canada and Canadians in both World Wars are remembered with deep appreciation and affection by Britons from all walks of life," said Brigadier-General Overton. "The Battle of Britain was key in securing the defence of Great Britain and, ultimately, assuring for Canada and the Allies a solid base from which to launch the campaigns that led to victory in Western Europe and the end of the Second World War. It was a great privilege to represent the Canadians and Newfoundlanders who contributed to this important victory early in the war and receive this commemorative medallion representative of their sacrifices."

The 16 nations receiving this medal are Australia, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic and Slovakia), France, Jamaica, Newfoundland (now a province of Canada), New Zealand, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Poland, Republic of Ireland, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), United Kingdom, and United States of America.

"It was an honour to receive the Battle of Britain commemorative medal from the Royal Air Forces Association on behalf of the whole of Canada," said Lieutenant-Colonel Home. "Sixteen nations came together to defend democracy at this pivotal point in history, and our close ties with the United Kingdom continue to this day as evidenced by our collective policies, operations and goals. It is fitting that the medal recognizes aircrew, ground crew, and support personnel as well as civilian employees and volunteers, as they all played an important role in achieving this victory. It is a fitting tribute to the more than 100 Canadians who took part in this battle and the 23 individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice."

The medal pays tribute not only to the airmen but also to the ground crew, and operational support, logistics, communications, engineering and medical crews from the 16 countries represented among the ranks of the RAF, and without whom victory may never have been possible.

A public-release version of the medal is available free of charge to the first 250,000 households that apply to receive one.

"What makes this anniversary so poignant is that it is likely to be the last opportunity for the remaining veterans to commemorate alongside us," said Air Marshal Sir Dusty Miller, president of the Royal Air Forces Association. "It is right that we pay tribute to not only the countries that participated but also all the airmen, airwomen and supporting trades that played a vital role in this epic battle. The commemorative medal is a fitting tribute to all those past and present and provides an opportunity to honour these remarkable individuals. We are pleased to be able to share this medal and everything it represents with the public."

The Royal Air Forces Association is the charity that supports the Royal Air Force family. The Association receives no government funding and depends entirely on the generosity of the general public.

**Writer's Note: Newfoundland became a Dominion – a self-governing state of the British Empire – in 1907. In 1927, the British government ruled that the area known as modern-day Labrador was to be considered part of the Dominion of Newfoundland. That status carried through the Second World War and beyond, and so the Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who served in any capacity through the Second World War did so as citizens of the Dominion of Newfoundland. It wasn't until 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 1949, that Newfoundland became Canada's tenth province. In 2001, a referendum officially changed the province's name to Newfoundland and Labrador.*

Hard work of stoker kept Thunder rolling on the waves

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

As Ronald Bradley prepares to remember his fallen countrymen on Nov. 11 he admits his personal wartime legacy was less "guts and glory" and more hard work "toiling away" as a stoker, which got the job done for Canada's unsung minesweepers during the Second World War.

"I joined up when I was 17-and-a-half. I wanted to be a gunner and like many kids in that era I had sort of a romantic comic book vision of what the war would be like," says Bradley, 90. "I wanted to see the world, but spent most of the war in the underbelly of a minesweeper."

During his more than two years aboard HMCS Thunder, one of 55 Royal Canadian Navy Bangor-Class minesweepers, Bradley and his mates did a job on the ship that not many wanted to do: work in the oppressively hot and humid boiler room stoke hole, and the engine room, to keep the ship operational. They also had to make sure smoke from the engines was not spotted by German warplanes or lookouts.

"We were all a bunch of young guys," he said. "There probably weren't more than five guys in our platoon who were more than 20 years old."

The entrance to the boiler room was a narrow descending ladder with an airlock. His worst fears were realized when his commanding officer confirmed there would be no way out if Thunder was ever hit by enemy fire or a torpedo.

His Commanding Officer told him, "The only way you can get out of here is the hole where the water would be coming in," recalls Bradley. "At that point I realized I really had no control over anything in my life."

Life at sea aboard Thunder was a strange new world for a young man born in Bolton, England, but who grew up in Winnipeg. An avid fisherman and hunter, he knew little about warfare or the navy life.

But the desire to avenge the death of his brother Frederick Bradley, an observer with the Royal Canadian Air Force's (RCAF) 418 Intruder Squadron of Edmonton, helped stir his will to serve.

The Intruder was the highest-scoring squadron in the RCAF during the Second World War and Frederick died when his plane was shot down over Holland in late 1942. His death shook young Bradley greatly.

"He was just out of high school and the brains of the family. He worked for an accounting outfit and when the war came along he went and joined the air force."

At first Bradley had set his intentions on joining the RCAF. At the time he was an apprenticeship machinist at his father's standard machine shop, which manufactured wartime parts. The RCAF told him he would be better suited as a mechanic.

"I didn't want to be a mechanic, so I said to myself if they are just going to put me back in the machine shop I'll join the navy instead."

Before he could enlist Bradley's father was required to sign his release papers because he was only 17.

After completing basic training at CFB Cornwallis in Deep Brook, Nova Scotia, Bradley was deployed aboard HMCS Thunder in March 1944.

> ***I wanted to be a gunner and like many kids in that era I had sort of a romantic comic book vision of what the war would be like.***
>
> -Ronald Bradley
> Second World War Veteran

One of the few joys for the crew aboard the ship was when Thunder's mechanical sweep would cut through a mine cable and the mine would float to the surface. The crew members would gather on the deck and try to blow up the mine with their rifles.

"Everyone [on the ship] turned out to shoot at these things," recalls Bradley. "The crew would take their chance with their rifles and machine guns, but mostly would never hit it. Later we would shoot them successfully with bigger guns."

Bradley was aboard Thunder from February 1944 to October 1945, as he and the crew of 83 meticulously cleared a mine-free path in the North Atlantic and English Channel for allied ships.

"You never hear a thing about the minesweepers," Bradley says. "You always hear about corvettes and destroyers during the Second World War, but when it comes to minesweepers there is nothing."

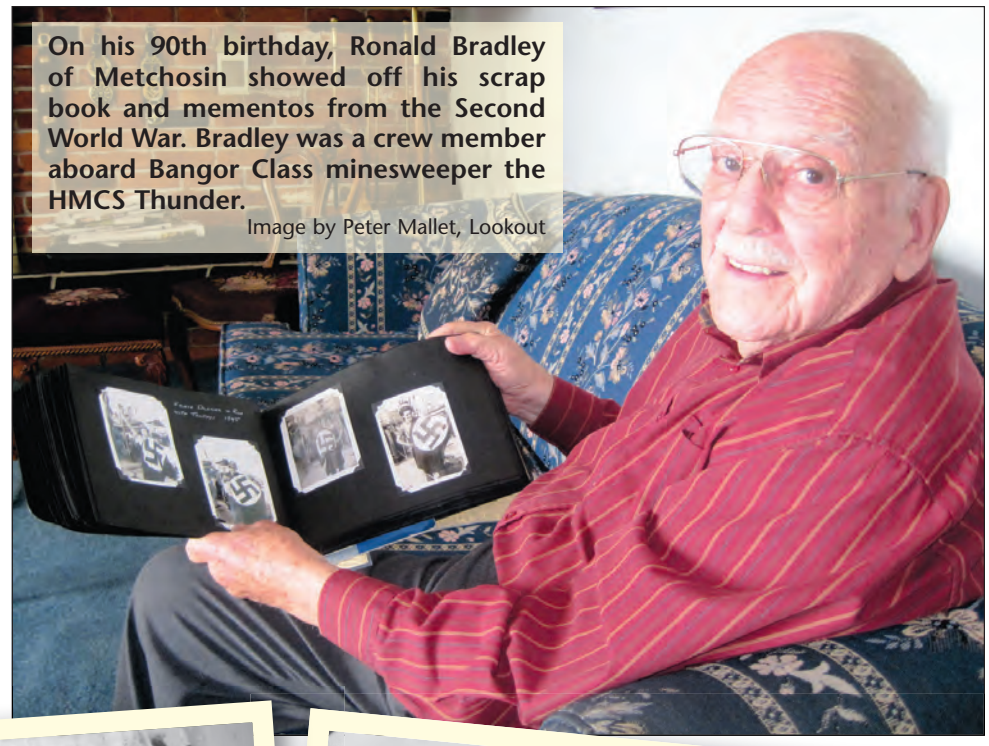
Some of the unsung accomplishments for Bradley and Thunder include crucial mine-sweeping efforts off the coast of La Rochelle, France, a major submarine port for the Germans following the Normandy Landing; a support role in the prolonged bombardment of Bordeaux; sweeping the heavily mined coastal waters off the Isles of Scilly; and assisting in the liberation of the Channel Islands from German occupation.

One of Thunder's most noteworthy moments, says Bradley, was forcing the surrender of German Auxiliary Minesweeper FGi07, a converted fishing trawler, in the Bay of Biscaye on the final days of the war in May 1945.

The headline in a report by The Canadian Press read: "Canadians Take Ship in Bloodless Attack", with the story noting, "It was the fourth enemy ship to be captured and brought to port with the Canadian Navy in this war."

Shortly after that incident word would come to the men aboard Thunder about the surrender of Germany.

"We just received word to return to base. Oh, Happy Day" he wrote in his diary when he learned of German's surrender on May 8, 1945, somewhere off the coast of La Rochelle.



On his 90th birthday, Ronald Bradley of Metchosin showed off his scrap book and mementos from the Second World War. Bradley was a crew member aboard Bangor Class minesweeper the HMCS Thunder.
Image by Peter Mallet, Lookout

1939 1940 1941 1942 1943 1944 1945

Chronology of the Second World War

Veterans Affairs Canada

September 3, 1939: the passenger liner Athenia is torpedoed, killing the first Canadian of the war, stewardess Hannah Baird of Quebec.

September 10, 1939: Canada declares war on Germany - the first and only time Canada has declared war on another country on its own.

September 14, 1939: The Prime Minister, William Lyon MacKenzie King, declares that Canada should be the arsenal of the Allies and pledges not to institute conscription.

September 16, 1939: the first Canadian convoy of merchant ships sails for Britain.

November 13, 1939: an advance party of Canadian officers lands in Britain.

December 17, 1939: the first of the main body of Canadian troops arrive in Scotland; inauguration of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan to train pilots and aircrew in Canada, away from the fighting.

April 9, 1940: Canada creates a Department of Munitions and Supply to manage the production of war material.

June 12, 1940: the 1st Brigade of the Canadian 1st Division lands in France; they are forced to leave days later when France surrenders to the Nazis.

November-December 1941: Canadian troops are stationed at Hong Kong; on December 8, 1941, Hong Kong is attacked by the Japanese; on December 25 Hong Kong falls (of 1,975 Canadian troops, 290 were killed with the remaining 1,685 taken prisoner; a further 260 of these Canadians would die as prisoners of war before the end of the war).

April 4, 1942: a Royal Canadian Air Force plane spots the Japanese fleet en route to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and gives warning in time for successful defence of the island (Winston Churchill cites this episode as "the most dangerous moment of the war").

April 27, 1942: the National Plebiscite and subsequent amendment to the National Resource Mobilization Act authorize conscription.

August 19, 1942: the Dieppe Raid sees a force of more than 6,000 Allied soldiers (almost 5000 of whom were Canadian) taking part in a raid in occupied France. The operation would prove to be a failure, with 1,946 of the force being taken prisoner and 916 Canadians losing their lives.

May 1943: the most dangerous period in the Battle of the Atlantic draws to a close; more than 1,200 Canadian and Newfoundland merchant seamen had been killed at sea since the beginning of the war.

July 10, 1943: Canadians, forming a part of the British 8th Army, join in the invasion of Italy.

August 17, 1943: the conquest of Sicily is completed.

September 3, 1943: On the fourth anniversary of Britain and France's declaration of war on Germany, Canadian troops join Allied forces in the invasion of the Italian mainland.

December 28, 1943: After heavy fighting, Canadian troops occupy Ortona, on Italy's east coast.

May 11, 1944: tanks of the 1st Canadian Armoured Brigade support the Allied assault up Italy's Liri Valley to begin the campaign to liberate Rome from the Nazis.

May 14, 1944: after four days of heavy fighting, the first enemy defences in the Liri Valley are broken.

May 16, 1944: the 1st Canadian Corps is ordered to advance on the second German defensive line across the Liri Valley (this is the first time since 1918 that a Canadian Corps - a body of troops numbering about 50,000 - was to attack on a European battlefield).

June 6, 1944: D-Day. 15,000 members of the Canadian Army as well as hundreds of members of the Royal Canadian Air Force and the crews of 60 vessels of the Royal Canadian Navy participate in the landings in Normandy as part of an invasion force of some 150,000 Allies (there were 1,074 Canadian casualties on D-Day, including 359 deaths).

July 10, 1944: the city of Caen in France, the Canadian D-Day objective, is finally taken by a combined British-Canadian assault.

July 23, 1944: Lt. General H.D.G. (Harry) Crerar takes over command of the First Canadian Army, the first army-sized field force in Canadian history.

August 1944: by this time 700,000 Canadian-built motor vehicles of more than 100 designs are in service.

August 25, 1944: the Battle of Normandy ends with the liberation of Paris, the Canadians having been successful in what is generally agreed to have been the fiercest portion of the campaign. Canadian losses had been large in proportion to the strength engaged. From D-Day through 23 August the total casualties of the Canadian Army had been 18,444, of which 5,021 were fatal.

September 1, 1944: Canadian troops, tasked with clearing the heavily-defended English Channel ports of their German garrisons, return to Dieppe as liberators.

October 23, 1944: the First Canadian Army begins the Battle of the Scheldt in Holland.

November 9, 1944: the end of the Battle of the Scheldt; a full three weeks would elapse before the Scheldt estuary could be cleared of mines and the first convoy, led by the Canadian merchant ship Fort Cataraqui, could sail into Antwerp with supplies for the Allies.

December 1, 1944: the Canadian Corps in Italy attempts to break through into the Lombardy Plain and attain the Senio River, the northernmost outpost of the Italian Front.

February 1, 1945: the withdrawal of Canadian forces from Italy for deployment in northwest Europe begins.

February 8, 1945: commencement of the Rhineland Campaign; General Crerar's First Canadian Army, augmented by Allied formations, becomes the largest force ever commanded by a Canadian.

April 1, 1945: the First Canadian Army begins its campaign to open up a supply route through Arnhem and clear the Netherlands and the coastal belt of Germany.

May 7, 1945: Germany surrenders, the war in Europe ends; the next day, May 8, is declared V-E Day.

August 6, 1945: dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in Japan and, days later, Nagasaki, ends the necessity of sending into battle the approximately 80,000 Canadian troops who volunteered to serve in the Pacific.

August 14, 1945: Japan surrenders - V-J Day. The Second World War is officially over.

Volunteer reservist at sea for biggest amphibious operation

DND

When Don McIntosh joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR) in 1942, he expected he would defend King and Country, experience adventure, and be issued with a snappy uniform.

What he didn't expect was that in 25 months he would take part in the biggest amphibious operation in history, that in 27 months his ship would be blown out from under him, or that 71 years later the Republic of France would confer upon him the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour for his part in the liberation of that country.

A young McIntosh left his hometown of Saskatoon in November 1940 to become a machinist apprentice at the Canadian National Railway's Transcona Shops in Winnipeg. About 18 months later a colleague came to work with a copy of the Winnipeg Free Press containing an ad seeking recruits for an engine room artificer training program.

McIntosh and two of his friends responded and were sworn in at HMCS Chippawa on May 15, 1942. He arrived in Calgary to commence his initial naval engineering training where he was paid $1.30 per day plus $70 per month to cover room and board provided by a nearby family.

After nine months he was drafted to Esquimalt where he underwent "field training" at HMCS Naden. For three weeks he was taught drill, some seamanship, and the use of small arms.

After his field training, McIntosh was transferred to the Dockyard and Naden II where in March, 1943 he was course loaded to the Mechanical Training Establishment, a rigorous 12-month course.

In January 1944, he graduated and was afforded three options: go to the corvettes in Halifax; go to the CVEs (escort aircraft carriers) being built in Seattle; or be assigned to billets in civilian coastal ships. McIntosh chose Halifax.

Operation Neptune

In late April 1944, McIntosh was selected for cruiser training in Scotland. Within days, he was drafted to the corvette, HMCS Regina, joining her in mid-May 1944 in Plymouth, and became a cog in the immense machine known as Operation Neptune, the invasion of Normandy.

After intensive preparations the Canadians were ready by May 1944. Their roles were immensely diverse and included screening against air, surface, and submarine threats to minesweeping, escort, naval gunfire support, and the landing of men, vehicles, and supplies.

HMCS Regina's D-day task, together with the Canadian corvettes Summerside and Woodstock, was to escort 27 Liberty ships from the Bristol Channel, along the south coast of England, and through the swept channels to Normandy arriving there in the early morning hours of June 7. Upon completion of this task, Regina returned to the United Kingdom to be dispatched repeatedly to escort other ships and convoys until Aug. 8, 1944.

McIntosh, having joined the ship only a few weeks before, settled into his shipboard routine of four hour watches in the engine room followed by eight hours off watch during which he did routine maintenance and running repairs, eating and sleeping when he could. For the most part he kept below deck, but on occasion caught a glimpse of the ships and sights around him which he said amazed him.

On Aug. 8, 1944, at about 7:55 p.m., McIntosh was relieved on watch. Regina was the sole escort of a small 10 ship convoy proceeding southwest along the north Cornwall coast near Trevose Head. At about 9:30 p.m. he felt a strong vibration and headed for the quarterdeck where he noticed that Regina was turning to close to Liberty ship, Ezra Weston. It was evident Ezra Weston had experienced an explosion.

Engine Room Artificer Donald McIntosh circa 1944.

He spoke briefly to Able Seaman Thomas Malone before AB Malone telephoned the bridge and asked permission to render safe the depth charges located on the quarterdeck. Permission granted, AB Malone very quickly set to work.

As darkness fell, McIntosh and an increasing number of the ship's company gathered on the quarterdeck and watched as another ship in the convoy, HM LCT 644 made various attempts to render assistance.

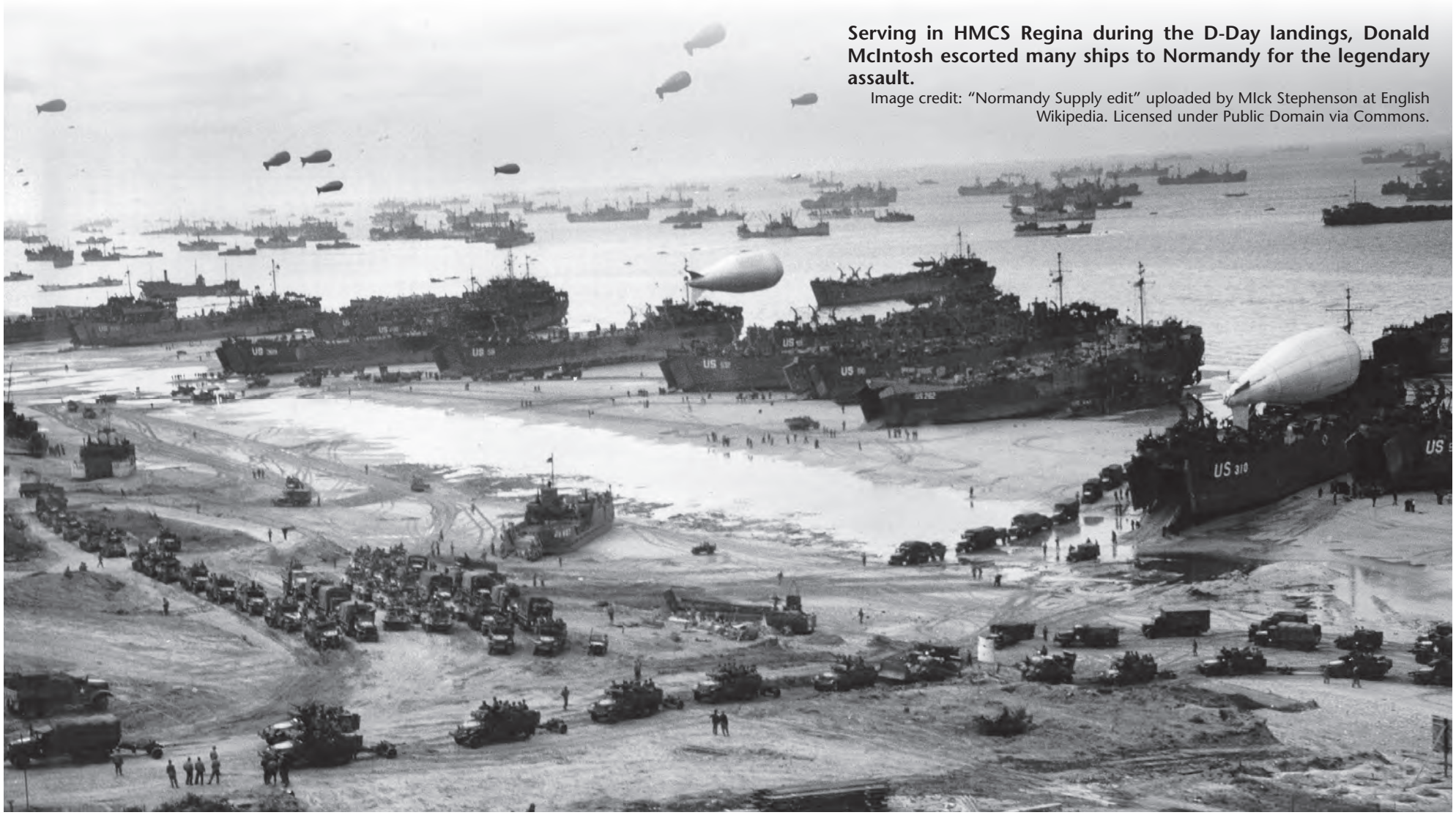
At 10:48 p.m., as the Ezra Weston began to settle, a violent explosion erupted beneath McIntosh launching him into the sea. Upon surfacing, he saw Regina had disappeared. While uninjured, he was covered by a thick layer of bunker C fuel oil. For more than two hours, he and several ship mates clung to a Carley float as hypothermia set in before they were rescued. Both AB Malone and Engine Room Artificer Helis perished along with 28 others.

French National Order of the Legion of Honour

In the last year, the French Government recognized those Allied veterans who survived the liberation and were still living by conferring upon them the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour. McIntosh was one of the Canadian veterans honoured.

He gratefully accepted the rank and accompanying medal, but he was mindful of AB Tom Malone who, by using his initiative, saved many lives; his friend Joe Helis, who relieved him in the Engine Room, and the other 28 men who lost their lives so suddenly and violently on that summer night so long ago.

"By order of the President of the Republic of France, you have been awarded the rank of Knight of the French National Order of the Legion of Honour…This distinction (the Legion of Honour is the highest national order of France) illustrates the profound gratitude that France would like to express to you. It is awarded in recognition of your professional involvement in the liberation of our country. Through you, France remembers the sacrifice of all of your compatriots who came to liberate French soil, often losing their lives in the process."



Serving in HMCS Regina during the D-Day landings, Donald McIntosh escorted many ships to Normandy for the legendary assault.

Image credit: "Normandy Supply edit" uploaded by MIck Stephenson at English Wikipedia. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons.

The 'hollow joy' of freedom

POW survivor recalls bombing of Nagasaki

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

Each November, when prisoner of war survivor Rudi Hoenson pauses to reflect on the true meaning of Remembrance Day a long ago nightmare comes to the forefront.

"I get so many sad feelings that well up inside of me and my thoughts instantly flash back to Nagasaki and the [Japanese] POW camp," says the 92-year-old veteran. "I think of all the people who died needlessly right in front of my eyes, and what went on across Europe, and in Nazi concentration camps. It's unbelievable, unimaginable to think that all of this could happen, but it did."

The final and most horrific chapter in Hoenson's war life was as a Japanese POW on Aug. 9, 1945, when a United States B-29 bomber dropped "Fat Man" on Nagasaki.

While it was a traumatic event for him, he says the use of the bomb was necessary and saved "countless untold" lives in the process.

"If it wasn't for the bomb, I would not be here today," he says. "All of us POWs would have been killed if the Americans landed on Japanese soil [with ground troops]. Furthermore, the bomb itself saved millions of lives that would have been lost had the war dragged on."

The young soldier joined the Dutch army after the bombing on Pearl Harbor at age 17. While they valiantly worked to protect the Dutch East Indies from the Japanese in 1942, the island eventually fell into enemy hands. Hoenson was captured and became a POW, first at Singapore's Changi Prison, and later to Camp Fukuoka 14 in Nagasaki.

Image by Peter Mallett, Lookout

Second World War veteran Rudi Hoenson goes through his photo album as he recalls his prisoner of war experience.

For more than three years, Hoenson and his fellow prisoners performed forced labour for the Mitsubishi Shipyard, helping the Japanese build a 45,000 ton aircraft carrier among other shipbuilding enterprises.

The prisoners were malnourished, and endured squalid living conditions and abuse in Camp 14. Hoenson says he weighed 160 lbs when he was taken prisoner and just 80 lbs when he left Japan.

"The first winter, over 70 prisoners died of pneumonia," he recalls.

His suffering as a POW came to end on a cloudy summer day in 1945.

"At 11:02 we prisoners witnessed the most unbelievable explosion. I was out in the open [at the prison camp] and the hot blast knocked me over. I was not badly burned, but chaps less than six feet away from me pushing a loaded cart were badly burned, their clothing on fire."

First Hoenson says there was a brilliant flash of light, thunderous shaking, and then the pressure wave that fanned out from ground zero. Of the 80,000 who died from the explosion and the radiation, more than half succumbed less than 24 hours after detonation.

"There was great confusion with the heat and smoke and we had no idea what to do at first," he says. "We were in the middle of it all. I can still remember the noise of the flames, the gas cylinders exploding, and one big noise when a large gas factory tank blue up. Everything was like kindling and it all started to burn. Through the smoke we saw the great mushroom cloud."

The camp and much of the surrounding area were reduced to intensely-burning rubble.

Hoenson and a group of surviving prisoners quickly fled the destroyed compound, with injured prisoners in tow, and headed for the higher ground of a nearby hill five kilometres away.

They had no idea that seemingly short journey would take the entire day.

The "unbelievable" unfolded as they attempted to navigate a burning "labyrinth" of devastated streets on the outskirts of Nagasaki.

"It was a scene of death and dying. The worst part was seeing many Japanese women and children [the men were at work in central Nagasaki] with their clothing ripped apart by the blast, some with their faces and bodies cut open. Some bleeding or blinded, and their flesh melting off their faces. There were children alone, their parents lying dead on the ground, and with absolutely no hope of help for some time."

Hoenson says he wouldn't be here if the man who pulled the switch from high above in a B-29 named Bock's Car, Capt Kemmit Heahan, had hit his intended target of the nearby Nagasaki railway station located just 900 metres away from their camp.

"The death toll would have been much higher," he says and could have rivalled the estimated 146,000 killed in Hiroshima just three days earlier.

But the cloudy day obscured the bombardier's target and he "unknowingly" dropped the bomb on the Urakami railway station, which was 1,450 metres distance from their location.

"If the bomb had been released as planned, I and all of my 198 fellow prisoners would have been turned into charcoal and ashes," he says.

In the days following their escape from camp, Hoenson and the other surviving POWs were captured by Japanese Police. They were housed in the city jail during the night and assigned to the job of clearing dead bodies from the wreckage, and debris from collapsed buildings.

"For days, we prisoners were pulling dead bodies out to an open field for identification. But on the fourth day, the bodies were starting to decompose in the summer heat."

Six days after the bomb was dropped Nagasaki, Japan, announced its surrender to the Allies, and two weeks later the war would come to an end.

"The excitement the day we were told the war was over lasted only a short time for me, I was too tired and had to lie down and rest. Freedom did not bring too much joy. I was just too worn out."

Nagasaki after the atomic bomb was dropped.
Image by Cpl Lynn P. Walker, Jr. (Marine Corps) - DOD"War and Conflict" image collection (HD-SN-99-02900). Licensed under Public Domain via Commons.

Canada and the Korean War

Veterans Affairs Canada

The year is 1950. The Second World War is over. The United Nations (UN) has been in place for just five years, and is working to promote global peace and security.

Suddenly, an international crisis is brewing in the Korean peninsula and people, the world over, are holding their collective breath. What happens next is history.

Setting the Stage

At the end of the Second World War, Japan's empire was dismantled and the Soviet Union, seeking to gain influence in the region, occupied North Korea while the Americans moved into South Korea. The Soviets and the Americans eventually left, but not until a communist government had been established in the North and a democratic government in the South. Tensions between the two Koreas grew to a climax and, on June 25, 1950, the military forces of North Korea crossed the 38th Parallel into South Korea. This marked the beginning of hostilities which were to rage on for more than three years, throughout the country known to its people as the Land of the Morning Calm.

Reaction of the West

The UN, created to resolve conflict between member nations primarily through dialogue and negotiation, also had the flexibility to use force in the pursuit of peace. The situation in Korea would require armed intervention, and 16 member nations, including Canada, would contribute military forces under United States command.

Korean War

Initial advances of North Korean troops reached Seoul, the capital of South Korea, but a September 1950 UN sea landing at Seoul's port of Inchon forced the North Koreans to retreat. Seoul was re-captured by UN Forces, which then crossed the 38th Parallel, moving toward the Chinese border. Chinese forces intervened with a massive offensive that drove the UN and South Korean Armies back across the 38th Parallel to southern positions along the Imjin River.

In mid-February 1951, units from Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and India joined to form one Commonwealth Force, as part of a north-eastern advance toward the 38th Parallel.

Korea, a rugged country with hills, swamps and rice fields, also has periods of severe seasonal weather, which hampered combat operations. By the end of March, Canadian troops were in the Kapyong Valley and in mid-April UN Forces were again north of the 38th Parallel.

Western politicians debated invading China at the risk of expanding the war, but decided against such action and in late April 1951, with new troops and equipment, Chinese and North Korean forces struck in the western and west-central sectors. The aggressive Chinese advance forced US troops in the area to move back or risk being overrun by the enemy.

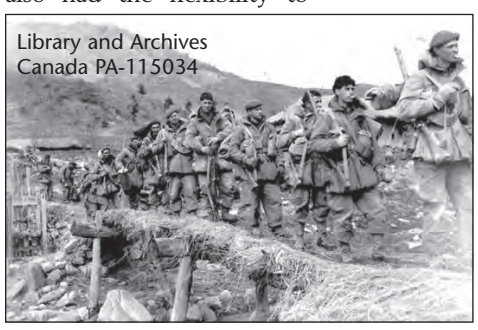
Canadian and other Commonwealth troops entered the battle in the Kapyong Valley and helped the Americans retreat to safety. The Canadians were awarded a US Presidential Citation for this gallant action.

Armistice

Early in July 1951, cease-fire negotiations began. However, there would be two more years of fighting until the signing of the Armistice at Panmunjom on July 27, 1953. The uneasy truce which followed left Korea a divided country, yet the first UN intervention in history effectively stopped the aggression, and the UN emerged from the crisis with enhanced prestige.

Canada's Contribution

As with the two world wars that preceded Korea, Canadians volunteered for military service far from home. More than 26,000 Canadians served in the Korean War, including sailors from eight destroyers and airmen who took part in many combat and transport missions. Canada's military contribution was larger, in proportion to its population, than most other UN participants.



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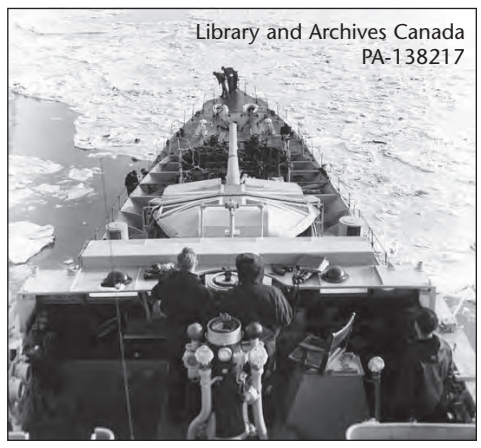

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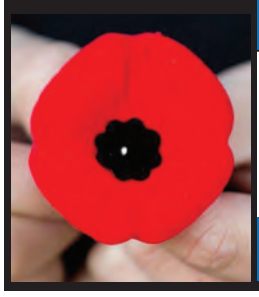
Above: **Troops of the 2nd PPCLI during patrol, March 1951.**
Right: **HMCS Sioux in icefield during patrol off Korean coast.**



Above: Veteran Murray Edwards is presented with his 90th year award.
Left: Members of PPCLI and Murray Edwards gather for his ceremony.

Photos by Peter Mallett, Lookout

PPCLI REGIMENTAL 90TH CERTIFICATE

Unit recognition means more to veteran than medals

Peter Mallett
Staff writer

The rack of medals attached to Murray Edwards green jacket are a testament to a long and illustrious military career, but the veteran says they pale in comparison to his latest award.

The 95-year-old resident of the Lodge at Broadmead was presented with a Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) Regimental 90th Certificate by Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, MGen (Ret'd) Brian Vernon.

"I've got a lot of medals here but they don't mean half as much to me as this certificate," said Edwards. "These medals came from government and the United Nations, but this award came from my fellow Patricians and that is all that I could ever ask for," he said.

MGen (Ret'd) Vernon presented him with the award in a courtyard patio at the sprawling retirement centre for seniors and veterans in Saanich.

Vernon noted how Edwards served Canada "unconditionally" from 1942 and the height of the Second World War, to the Korean War and the Battle of Kapyong, followed by Cyprus, and the Six Day War in the Middle East before retiring in 1969.

Edwards' best friend Peter Chance, also 95, was there to cheer him on exclaiming, "Well put Murray" when reflecting on the meaning of the certificate.

The pair became instant friends in 1975 when Edwards was volunteering with the Cadet Corps program at CFB Esquimalt. Chance was working for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and came looking for support at the base, and said before "he could blink" the program had the support of the Rear-Admiral.

"He's a very warm-hearted soul and he and I have been kindred spirits for all of these years," said Chance. "He's an incredible man with an incredible intellect who is both an excellent researcher; he produced several [instructional] booklets over the years, and also as a teacher and communicator."

This brilliance was quickly discovered shortly after Edwards joined the Queens Own Riffles of Toronto in June 1942 at the height of the Second World War. While he was initially deployed to a reinforcement depot in Aldershot, England, Edwards was then hired as an instructor, and eventually returned to Canada in 1944 to train officers for the D-Day mission at the Vernon Battle School.

"It really wasn't a happy effort because you would do your best to prepare these chaps for combat, and off they would go," says Edwards. "A couple of months later you would hear one was killed or one was wounded and here you are safe and sound back in Canada."

Edwards says it wasn't a memory easily erased in the years following the war; it eventually pushed him to resume his military career when the Korean War broke out in 1950. This time he would be on the front lines and got a front-row view of the Battle of Kapyong.

Other highlights of his career include Officer in Charge of Canadian Army Civil Defence School from 1960 to 1961; Company Commander of 1 PPCLI, 1961 to 1963; staff officer for Canada's contingent in Cyprus in 1964, and later seconded to External Affairs for duty in the Middle East following the Arad-Israeli Six Day War in 1967.

When Edwards pauses for two minutes of silence on Nov. 11, like many other Canadians he will remember his comrades, countrymen, civilians and former enemies who lost their lives in armed conflict. But most importantly, says Edwards, he will remember the "Patricias" and those in Canada's military family.

"They are the essence of my military family, within the army we are one and support and care for each," said Edwards. "We look after our own people and it is that support that keeps you going when times get tough."

Edwards moves from behind the scenes to front lines of Korea

When the Lookout Newspaper asked The Lodge at Broadmead resident Murray Edwards to share his memories of the Korean War and the Battle of Kapyong, we got more than we expected. Edwards, 95, jumped at the chance to write about his military career. The following is his essay:

The Second World War was barely five years behind us when suddenly a new war intruded.

Communist forces in North Korea had invaded South Korea, a free and independent country, in a move to turn all of the Korean Peninsula into a communist state.

When the United Nations (in June 1950) called for member nations to provide forces to repel their invasion, there was little interest or public support when Ottawa called for volunteers to form a special force to join the UN.

Fortunately there were enough willing recruits and Second World War veterans to quickly form a new brigade. Enter Murray Edwards.

I had joined the Queen's Own Riffles during the Second World War where my potential as a tactics instructor was quickly recognized. I had the unhappy task of training others to fight and hope I had done well by them.

But now the call to a new war came and I finally had the opportunity to do what I had trained others to do.

I joined the 2nd Br., The Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry and proceeded to Korea in late 1951 to join the British Commonwealth Brigade.

Following several months of fighting, the brigade, with the help of the other forces, pushed the Chinese forces back into North Korea, and we were withdrawn for a well-earned rest in late April.

But it was a rest that would be quickly interrupted when word came the Chinese had launched a major spring offensive and the central thrust was coming down our valley.

Our Brigade Commander made a quick reconnaissance and put us and the Australians in a blocking position.

When the Chinese mass right attack came they first struck the Australians whose position was less defensible than Canadians. They then turned their attention to the Patricians (on April 24, 1951). I had recently left this platoon to take over as a Quarter Master, and found myself in the command dugout with the C.O. Battle Adjt and the signaller, and thus in a position to follow the battle.

At one point the Chinese threatened to over-run a key position and was only stopped when the platoon commander called for the New Zealand artillery to bring down fire on his own position.

American air re-supply enabled the Patricians to continue to hold out. Eventually this led to the failure of the Chinese to break through to Seoul, and the heavy casualties forced a Chinese withdrawal.

A similar offence in the west against the other Commonwealth brigade had literally wiped out the British Gloucester Battalion, but, again, had inflicted such heavy casualties the Chinese never again mounted a major offensive.

The American Command considered these two battles as the turning point of the war. In recognition of this they awarded their unique Presidential Unit Citation to the Gloucesters, and their Royal Artillery Support of the 29 Commonwealth Brigade, and the Royal Australian Battalion, and our Patricians, and our American tank support. It was the only time such an honour has been awarded to non-American units.

Korea made Ottawa aware that if Canada was to have a voice in the post-Second World War international community then they would need a military force to back up that voice. As a result, we were offered immediate field transfers to the Regular Force.

Back in Canada the forces were being made air-borne. It may be the Forgotten War to the public, but it had a lasting effect on Canada. I would also like to mention that a grateful Korean people continue, as they have done for so many years, to invite 30 veterans and their families each year to be their guests for a week.

HMCS Algonquin remembered in mint

Rachel Lallouz
Staff Writer

When HMCS Algonquin was payed off in June 2015, members of the final crew, including Lieutenant (Navy) Doug Totten, were lucky enough to receive an engraved ship's coin commemorating the event.

The coin is made of the bronze-coloured metal cartridge brass and fits comfortably in the palm of his hand. Because of the metal's surprisingly heavy weight, he describes the coin as more "robust" than others available. Engraved on the front of the coin is an image of the ship. Curving around the image are lists of the ship's particulars: its length, width, speed, and commissioning date, among other facts.

Flipping the coin over reveals HMCS Algonquin's crest: a fist rising straight upwards from breaking waves, holding a trident tightly in its grasp. Impaled on the spear is an eel, representing a German submarine, which references the anti-submarine missions of the first Algonquin in the Second World War.

Designed by Commander Latham Jenson, Executive Officer of Algonquin during the same war, the crest is inspired by the meaning of "Algonquin" as "the place of spearing fish and eels."

But only 283 of these coins were given out to crew members and certain dignitaries, with a meagre 50 available for purchase by other members of the military.

As Lt (N) Totten found out, the demand for the little piece of memorabilia far exceeded what Algonquin could provide.

"Once we sold out of the 50 coins, there was a national request from people across the country who had served on the ship and were contacting me via email, phone, and Facebook," says Lt(N) Totten, who served in Algonquin for two years as a Combat Systems Engineer trainee.

> ***There was such an outpouring of want for the coin.***
> -Lt(N) Doug Totten

Soon after the decommissioning, he reached out to SGS Marketing Ltd, an industrial manufacturing company based in Calgary, Alberta, who designed a version of the ship's coin available for purchase. CFB Esquimalt's CANEX then stepped in, agreeing to purchase the coins and sell them in-store and online at www.canex.ca.

"Because there was such an outpouring of want for the coin, and because I understand the significance of wanting a memento of the ship, I felt it was appropriate to investigate alternate methods to get coins for veterans and retired military members across Canada," says Lt (N) Totten.

The coin is expected to be available in a few weeks.

Left: **The front of HMCS Algonquin's cartridge brass coin, which features historical facts and particulars of the ship.**

Below: **The back of Algonquin's coin.**

Photos by Rachel Lallouz, Lookout

Did you know...

1 The most sacrosanct and central element in Remembrance is the two minutes of silence. During this time of reflection, Canadians pause to honour, thank and remember our Fallen.

2 Every year, the Legion conducts the Poppy Campaign to honour those who serve, and to raise funds in support of Veterans and their families. From the last Friday in October to Remembrance Day, all Canadians can be a part of the campaign. Wear a poppy, attend a ceremony, and show your recognition for those who gave their lives for our freedom.

3 The seven Books of Remembrance commemorate the lives of more than 118,000 Canadians who, since Confederation, have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in uniform. The names inscribed in the Books of Remembrance can also be found in the Canadian Virtual War Memorial on the Veterans Affairs' website, www.veterans.gc.ca.

4 As a way to honour relatives and friends who have served Canada, Canadians are invited to forward a photograph of a deceased veteran to Dominion Command to be displayed on large video screens located near the National War Memorial and shown prior to the start of the Remembrance Day Ceremony held Nov. 11.

5 Black Canadians have a long history of service in uniform. Often having to overcome great challenges just to enlist in the military in earlier eras when our society was less inclusive, they persevered to make their mark. From the days before Canada was even a country of its own to the current efforts in Afghanistan, the sacrifices and achievements of Black Canadians have shone through. Read their profiles of courage on the Veteran Affairs Canada website, www.veterans.gc.ca.

6 To mark the 75th anniversary of Canada's engagement in the Second World War, beginning Sept. 10, 2014, and up to the end of 2020, living Canadian veterans of the Second World War can receive a tribute lapel pin and certificate in recognition of their service to Canada. Contact Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) at 1-866-522-2122.

Ceremonial Guard: Donning the Scarlet Tunic

DND

Uniforms are a display of strength, of unity, and of belonging. They inspire a sense of identity.

Enter the sea of red comprising members of the Ceremonial Guard of the Canadian Armed Forces. Represented by over 80 different units, once the Ceremonial Guard dons the scarlet tunics the expectation of oneness, sameness, is brought upon them as every move is executed in perfect synchronization.

The uniforms they wear are those of the Governor General's Foot Guards and Canadian Grenadier Guards; two regiments that continue to contribute significantly to this day.

Upon arrival, new recruits are taken and put into the tender care of their instructors. During the indoctrination period, recruits are required to completely commit themselves day and night to a program of training that addresses any inadequacies, teaches the customs and practices of the group, and the customs and practices of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF).

The Ceremonial Guard is a composite CAF unit of over 400 people including the Governor General's Foot Guard company and the Ceremonial Guard Band. The majority of the Guard is composed of Regular and Reserve Force Guard, and includes soldiers from regiments across Canada, and the ceremonial members from Canada's navy and air force.

"I remember my first experience and first march," says Corporal Christopher Hutchinson. "The focus was still on individual development, but at the same time joining the Ceremonial Guard stopped being about just you."

The soldiers become assimilated into military society, culture, and way of life. As the teaching and indoctrination continues, the trainees begin to bind together as a group. The recruits are then tested through a series of challenges. These trials are both physically and mentally demanding, designed to induce stress and measure their reactions to ensure teamwork.

"It's about performing and standing up and becoming a symbol," says Cpl Hutchinson.

Shift from civilian to soldier

When a soldier puts on the uniform there is a shift from civilian to soldier. When a soldier puts on the scarlet tunic there is a change from soldier to a member of the Ceremonial Guard.

To don the blood red tunic is to enter into a sacred contract to carry on the legacy of those before. The soldiers choose not to communicate, allowing their silence to speak volumes to their discipline and pride. The beating of the drum, the playing of the band and the wailing of the pipes warns of their approach. Their weapons become an extension of themselves, acting as appendages that serve to carry on the tradition and heritage of those that have also worn the uniform.

Scarlet tunic origins

The scarlet tunic and bearskin cap worn as full dress of the Governor General's Foot Guards is modeled after their allied regiment the Coldstream Guards. General Order No. 106 of 1929 promulgated the approval of His Majesty King George V to a formal alliance between His Majesty's Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards and the Governor General's Guards.

Consequently, upon the designation by His Majesty King George V as a Regiment of Foot Guards, the Canadian Grenadier guards were awarded the privilege of wearing the Grenadier Regiment of Foot Guards uniform by Royal Warrant on April 14, 1914.

The Ceremonial Guard of the CAF has the privilege of wearing the uniforms of both these regiments today.

The Faces of Peace

Veteran Affairs Canada

The mission of Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members is to defend our country, its interests and its values, while contributing to international peace and security.

CAF members serve in many capacities at home and throughout the world. Over the years, many CAF veterans have served overseas in a variety of United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and other multinational task forces.

International peace missions often have positive effects, but the strife, conflict and death that can surround these efforts is not always easy to handle for those involved.

Being separated from friends and family for months at a time, the possibility of witnessing extreme violence and cruelty, of having to use force or have force used against you, and the realization that you could be killed or wounded while carrying out your duties are some of the experiences that many CAF veterans know well.

International Efforts

During the first half of the 20th century, some 1.7 million Canadians were called upon to defend peace and freedom around the world during the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War. Following these conflicts, in which more than 110,000 Canadians died, Canada and other countries felt that it was better to try to prevent wars when possible than fight them.

Canada played a leading role in the peacekeeping movement from the outset. In fact, a Canadian, Lester B. Pearson, won the 1957 Nobel Peace Prize for his pioneering vision in helping establish a UN force to prevent the Suez Crisis of the 1950s from escalating into a global confrontation.

Since then, Canada's commitment to international peace efforts and other overseas military actions has continued.

Some of the places Canadians have served include Egypt, Cyprus, Syria, the Persian Gulf, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, Haiti, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, East Timor, and Afghanistan.

Peace Mission Challenges

Peacekeeping is based on the idea that having a force of impartial troops present in a regional conflict can help reduce tensions and improve the chance of peaceful settlement to a violent conflict. But filling this role is demanding work.

For those on international peace missions, they could be called upon to monitor cease-fires, patrol buffer zones, act as an intermediary between clashing groups, clear land mines, investigate war crimes, protect refugees and provide humanitarian assistance.

The role of the CAF now involves all aspects of peace support, including peacemaking and peace-building. The skills and training needed for peace support includes combat skills and contact skills. Their lives and the lives of others often depend on their skill in both areas and their ability to use both at the right time.

Each situation encountered by the CAF when they enter into a new peace mission is unique. Military members returning from peace missions often remark that "there was very little peace to keep," a reference to the fact that our military is often asked to intervene in situations of full-fledged war where the environment is not at all peaceful.

Facts and Figures

The number of Canadians who have served has varied greatly over the years, according to the needs of our country and the world. Over one million Canadians served during the Second World War. Our present-day military numbers are approximately 68,000 regular force members and 27,000 reservists.

More than 125,000 CAF members have served in dozens of international peace missions to more than 35 countries over the past six decades. Approximately 130 Canadians have died in these efforts and many more have suffered physical and mental injury.

The military members perform many other important functions. Search-and-rescue operations, patrolling our air space and territorial waters, supporting anti-drug operations and helping out in the aftermath of natural disasters, such as the Manitoba Flood of 1997 or the Great Ice Storm of 1998, are just a sample of some of these vital duties.

Heroes and Bravery

In 1988, the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize was collectively awarded to the world's peacekeepers, including thousands of Canadians who served in UN missions during that year. This honour inspired Canada to create the Canadian Peacekeeping Service Medal.

International peace missions have a large element of reaching out. While there is always a political element to peace missions, the on-the-ground efforts are often characterized by human emotion and compassion.

For example, during the UN peace efforts in Somalia in the early 1990s, Lt(N) Heather MacKinnon operated a medical clinic, worked in hospitals and orphanages, and provided humanitarian assistance to the victims of war and famine in the embattled city of Mogadishu. It was a tense and dangerous time, and the risks of working there were very real. Lt(N) MacKinnon helped many people in this time of great upheaval and laid the groundwork for further relief efforts in the battered country.

Sacrifice

Many Canadians have served on several international missions in the course of their careers, repeatedly fulfilling their duties against the constant background of danger. One example of this special effort comes from Master Corporal Mark Isfeld. He was a combat engineer who served in three peace missions before losing his life in a land mine explosion in Croatia in 1994.

This Canadian soldier was known for giving children in war-torn regions handmade dolls that his mother and others in Canada had made. He passed out these dolls to try to bring a little happiness and hope to the children.

After his death, the story began to spread of how he touched children's' lives with those handmade dolls from Canada. Thousands of these dolls then began to flood in from people all across Canada who decided to make dolls for other Canadian soldiers to give away while overseas and keep MCpl Isfeld's tradition alive. The dolls have since become known as Izzy dolls.

Canadian Armed Forces veterans have made many personal and global achievements, and have made personal sacrifices to defend Canada's interests and its values, while contributing to international peace and security. These men and women take their honoured place in our country's military history beside their fellow veterans and fallen comrades of Canada's earlier war efforts.

Their commitment has earned Canada a worldwide reputation as a country that supports and protects peace.

Canada Remembers Program

As the years have passed, the focus of commemorative events such Remembrance Day has expanded. Where once they centred on the achievements and sacrifices of the veterans of the World Wars and Korea, they now include veterans of peacetime CAF activities.

The Canada Remembers Program of Veterans Affairs Canada encourages all Canadians to learn about the sacrifices and achievements made by Canada's veterans during times of war, military conflict and peace, and to become involved in remembrance activities that will help to preserve their legacy for future generations.

Tribute workout honours Lt Nuttall

Peter Mallett
Staff Writer

Veteran and CrossFit Stasis founder Bruno Guevremont warms up on an exercise bike at his Colwood facility.

Each Canadian has his or her own way of remembering those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their nation.

"Remembrance Day is a personal thing for everybody," says Afghanistan war veteran Bruno Guevremont.

As the owner of CrossFit Stasis in Colwood, the retired sailor has created a special workout in honour of Lt Andrew Richard Nuttall, who died in action, and was a coach at CrossFit Vancouver. Guevremont calls the gruelling workout called NUTS.

"For me as I'm doing the workout, I'll be thinking of every name of every guy that passed on my tours [of duty] when I was over there.

Nuttall was killed by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) in the Panjwayi District of Afghanistan on Dec. 23, 2009.

"The workout is really about the physical pain of pushing yourself and creating an emotional state where you become basically a suffering individual – at that point of the workout you can then say to the fallen 'hey man I'm remembering you'," says Guevremont.

Guevremont, 41, was a Leading Seaman and a Royal Canadian Navy clearance diver. During his military career that spanned 14 years he served two tours in Afghanistan as a member of a Counter Improvised Bomb-Disposal Team.

In one highly-publicized incident on June 6, 2009, Guevremont was elevated to hero status after deactivating a live bomb worn by a Taliban suicide bomber. At the time, he wasn't wearing a protective bomb suit, but was able to defuse the bomb with wire cutters, surgical scissors and duct tape, lifting the explosive device off the bomber's shoulders and saving countless lives in the process.

"I had my face on top of a bomb two to three times a day," Guevremont told the Canadian Press following the incident, while also noting his team had logged 96 calls, and defused over 100 roadside bombs and booby traps from the spring of 2009 until the end of that year.

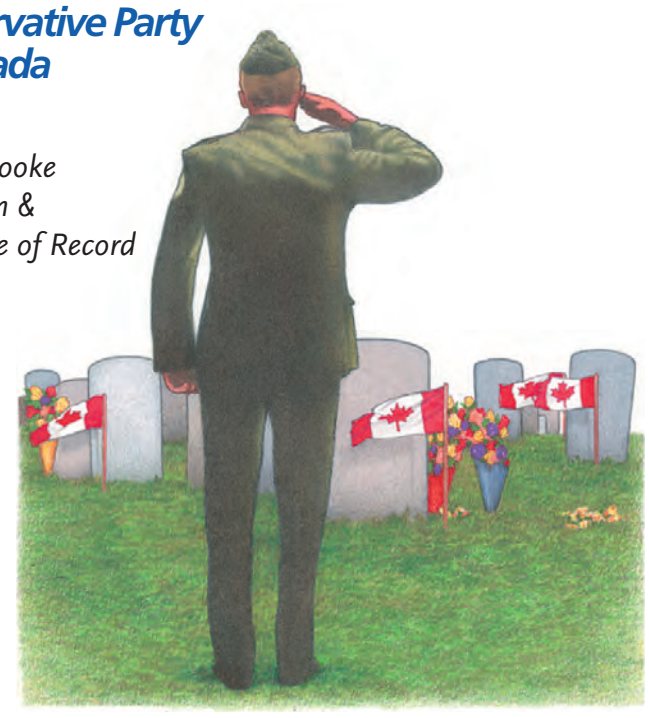
It wasn't always a happy ending, and every bomb wasn't always defused safely, Guevremont says.

He took up CrossFit upon his return to Canada. Guevremont was soon diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)after learning of Lt Nuttall's tragic end, and seeing other members of his team killed by IEDs. He drifted away and abandoned CrossFit in 2009, but rediscovered it the next year. He is now a firm believer that this sport helped him overcome his PTSD and can help others overcome their problems, big and small.

"The more you work out, the more endorphins you release in your brain, the better you feel about yourself," says Guevremont. "It's a form of healing for me and physical meditation. Combined with healthy eating and living it helps me cope with the bad days."

Guevremont also credits touring Western Europe's famous Second World War battle sites, accompanied by his 10-year-old son Maddox, as part of the healing process.

So on Nov. 11, as his heart rate increases and the sweat begins to flow, Guevremont will remember all of the soldiers who have died in past wars, and the ones he knew.



Two Canadian Aviators fly with the SNMG2 Command Staff

Air Detachment
HMCS Winnipeg

Two members of *HMCS Winnipeg*'s Helicopter Air Detachment (HelAirDet) took part in a unique opportunity this past summer on board the Standing NATO Maritime Group Two (SNMG2) flagship, Federal German Ship (FGS) Hamburg while operating in support of Operation Reassurance.

During the SNMG2 assembly in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, the task group's Chief of Staff was looking for a helicopter element coordinator. A person in this position tasks and schedules all of the task group's helicopter operations while balancing maintenance and crew requirements. The Canadian tactical coordinators from *Winnipeg*'s HelAirDet volunteered.

"Over the following few days we changed our mentality from being helicopter operators to members of the SNMG2 staff. Using our experience as operations officers, we jumped into preparations to ensure that we were prepared to successfully manage five helicopters from four nations," said the first pilot.

The decision was made to have one Helicopter Element Coordinator remain onboard FGS Hamburg while the other pilot assumed all flying duties on *Winnipeg*. The duties switched after two weeks.

"Surprisingly, task group coordination was very similar to a basic helicopter start; setup your lines of communication, check everyone's equipment, and brief the plan. Next, you acquire all the information about each nation's helicopter equipment. Finally, give the plan to the professional air crews in a timely fashion so they can highlight or resolve any possible conflicts before they become showstoppers," added the second pilot.

As helicopter element coordinators, the pilots coordinated a multitude of operational and exercise flight missions including a medical evacuation, multiple anti-submarine exercises and an emergency response. Both pilots quickly developed the skill of discerning which information was crucial to the Admiral and which was not.

The Canadian tactical coordinators each received an overwhelming welcome from their German hosts and would receive morning greetings in Bulgarian, German, Greek, Italian, Spanish and Turkish, from the multinational staff. To say thank you to their German hosts, one of the Canadian pilots cooked breakfast for all of the officers on board Hamburg. French toast with Canadian maple syrup (delivered by helicopter) was a huge hit, and a sweet note on which to part company.

Op Reassurance provides unique training activities such as this provides an excellent opportunity to develop their skills and enhances their ability to operate with our NATO Allies while building cohesion within the Alliance.

HMCS Winnipeg's participation in Exercise Joint Warrior 152

SLt Jamie Tobin
HMCS Winnipeg

HMCS Winnipeg and its Standing Maritime Group One (SNMG1) consorts participated in Exercise Joint Warrior 152 (Ex JW152) from Oct. 5 to 15. Joint Warrior is a multinational joint task force exercise in the coastal waters of Scotland involving more than 30 warships representing 12 countries.

During the exercise, the task group's mission was to assist a fictitious nation with the enforcement of a mock United Nations Security Council Resolution. The resolution called for protection of the population from the threat of terrorism, protecting critical infrastructure, reassuring the local and international community, and ensuring freedom of maritime navigation.

"Exercise Joint Warrior 152 was a great opportunity for *HMCS Winnipeg* to train with all of our warfare capabilities while demonstrating the value that this high-readiness team brings to international operations," said Commander Pascal Belhumeur, Commanding Officer of *Winnipeg*.

During the exercise, all of *Winnipeg's* capabilities were put to the test. The ship's Above Water Warfare team protected the population and infrastructure by defending against aerial and surface threats from military forces, while the Underwater Warfare team scanned the waters of the exercise area searching for submarines and other subsurface threats.

The scenario also saw the ship's Sea King helicopter fly reconnaissance missions to identify various threats and provide aerial protection to both the ship and its allies. It also included mine countermeasure units working to clear the waterways of explosive hazards.

Further, *Winnipeg's* Enhanced Naval Boarding Party boarded several suspicious vessels in the region to investigate their business and ensure that they were not contributing to terrorist activity.

Finally, the remainder of the crew in *Winnipeg* supported the exercise's other tasks by maintaining the ship's propulsion and combat systems, responding to damage control situations, providing casualty support and ensuring the well-being of the team.

"The team responded in Exercise Joint Warrior 152 just like they would any real-world scenario," said Lieutenant-Commander Kevin Whiteside, Executive Officer of Winnipeg. "We came together and responded like the high-readiness unit that we have trained to be and as a result, we further built upon our interoperability with our NATO counterparts."

While deployed, *HMCS Winnipeg* is participating in a number of joint NATO training exercises, including Exercise Northern Coast and Exercise Trident Juncture.

Photoa by Cpl Stuart MacNeil, HMCS WINNIPEG

Above: **Lt(N) Trevor Robinson controls the ship's movements under the supervision of HMCS Winnipeg's Commanding Officer, Commander Pascal Belhumeur, during Exercise Joint Warrior.**
Inset: **Crewmembers on board use a .50 calibre machine gun during an asymmetric attack training scenario.**

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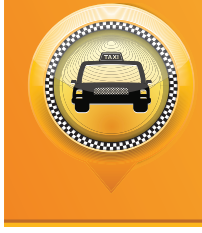

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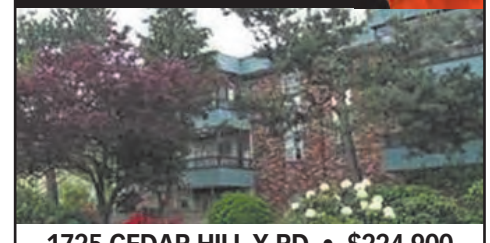

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